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Time for a Counter-Offensive

Two years ago, the Conservative Party was a beaten rabble, riven by an electoral defeat from which it had not even saved its good name or self-confidence. Their leader was regarded in the country as a sour joke. They had lost their Ulster connection, and were being driven back to the grouse-moors in Scotland. First-time voters shunned their candidates. Labour, in bold contrast, had healed its 1969 breach with the unions and, although its popular vote was not impressive, was able to present a fairly united face to the Augean inheritance of the Heath years. It is a measure of the chronic nature of our crisis that 1974 now looks almost halcyon in retrospect – for one thing, production is actually lower now than during the three-day week. And for another, the Conservative Party is being seriously spoken and written about as if it were an alternative government. It will not do to say, as some Labour supporters always do, that the daily press is basically sympathetic to Central Office (although it is). The fact is that Labour has locked itself into an airtight box, and has openly surrendered the government of the country to its creditors. And, since such a policy does not come as naturally to most Labour supporters as it does to their Tory counterparts, it has failed to give the impression of being absolutely happy with the situation. Hence the double-bluff of Conservative propaganda this week, which invokes the IMF as a restraint on Labour's commitments to social reform, and then accuses the Government of taking the country into pawn.

If, as *The Right Approach* claims, 'The facts of life are Tory', then there would be every justification for the delegates at Blackpool who refused to be 'responsible' about the crisis of sterling. They might easily retort that the Tories could clean up their own mess, and that the agonising postponement of so many urgent measures need not be undertaken by a Labour government. But this is a counsel not only of despair but of danger.

Conservatives have served notice of their intention to 'roll back' every humble gain made by social democracy since the war. They advocate a society given over to the relentless

pursuit of profit, with the 'incentive' of unemployment and poverty to discipline the workforce. They have not forgotten to put forward proposals on health and education which would protect their own elite from the consequences of such a rat-race, and they have made it clear that people in the Third World who have found some marginal decency in their dealings with the Labour Government could expect no more. Nor could a party which gave a platform to double-dyed sectarians this week, and did not even spare us a speech from Lord Brookeborough, be expected to make an honourable settlement in Ulster. The return of a Conservative government would, in short, be a catastrophe of more than usual magnitude.

So the line must be held. But it will break if the present policy is maintained by the present combination of alternate bullying and appeals to loyalty. Literally nobody now believes the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he says there are no strings to the IMF loan. If Mr Healey cannot do better than this, he should be replaced. But, more importantly, so should those in our unsupervised financial institutions who are prepared to knife the currency rather than see Labour take even one tiny step towards redistribution and public ownership.

There is only one real chance. Labour has the priceless asset of recognising that our troubles derive from the antiquated system of production in Britain. That, not the wage bill or the reserve position of sterling, is the root of the matter. There is an untried programme of planning agreements, investment drives and workers' participation which may be set at nought by the IMF but which has everything to recommend it. Only the caution of two prime ministers has prevented its implementation before now. Not to press ahead with it is to admit that the Tories are basically right in their diagnosis, and that capitalism should be allowed to have its head again. There will be no real solution to the British crisis as long as it is tacitly assumed that socialism is the last resort of a bankrupt people rather than the vigorous assertion of democracy in the productive process.

Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Mrs Thatcher's Approach

Madame Chairman, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to open another column here in Brighton this week, and to say, first of all, how enormously successful our last week's column has been. You all know how politicians tend to ignore the press or to treat the opinions of columns as if they were beneath their consideration. And yet, no sooner had our views on the absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer from Blackpool last week been distributed on the streets of London (and here I would like to pay a tribute to the cooperation of the compositors, proof-readers, printers and distributors, who work so hard behind the scenes to ensure that the NEW STATESMAN appears in the metropolis on Thursday morning), than Mr Healey had hopped on a plane and gone to the Winter Gardens, in order to repair the damage we had pointed out. (Applause). I think that is something to be proud of! (Prolonged cheers).

Now, I have mentioned this first, because I wish to consider the events in Blackpool as it were through the eyes of Brighton. As you will be aware, there is very little a Conservative conference can do, particularly in Opposition, except review what the preceding conferences have said, and make appropriate noises. The Tory conference is not a democratic body. It has no policy-making powers. And, indeed, looking at some of the representatives assembled here, I'm rather glad it doesn't. What you have seen on your televisions and read about in your daily papers has been a carefully organised, controlled and sanitised advertisement for the shadow cabinet.

Yet I have to say, Madame Chairman, that this advertisement for the shadow cabinet has come at the prime time of the political year. The crisis in sterling, the antics of Mr Healey, the Prime Minister's warnings of dictatorship – all have been a godsend for the advertisers. *The Right Approach* is a persuasively written, although undistinguished, document. Yet its appearance could not have been better timed. It warns against the illusion of social democracy, arguing that the influence of the Marxist Left is bound to increase still further within the Labour Party, that the social democrats are on the decline. Blackpool has increased the plausibility of such a view. Sir Geoffrey Howe refers to the two Labour Parties, the Marxists, and those represented by Callaghan and Healey. He is able to turn on Callaghan and say: 'You are wrong, there is an alternative to dictatorship, and the alternative is us, the Tories.'

Madame Chairman, this column regrets the ineptitude of Callaghan and Healey. It believes, it passionately believes, that the Callaghans of this world do not have a monopoly of democracy – indeed, it con-

siders that the Prime Minister has altogether a very poor grasp of the concept. And it notes the triumphant ease with which Mrs Thatcher has inverted Mr Healey's threat of riots in the streets in order to declare that there would be dancing in the streets if the Tories had their way with the nation. This column believes that the expression 'dancing in the streets' is the first really serendipitous phrase that Mrs Thatcher has introduced into the political vocabulary. Yet we retain a sceptical attitude towards the prospect of Tory success in the near future.

If those who have advanced this notion are assuming that an even larger crash is on the way, then that is one thing. Obviously if the whole economy collapses like an old soufflé, an election will have to be called on the most disadvantageous terms. But if the argument is that the Tories are now so much stronger than they were last year and that they therefore somehow deserve another go, we think the reasoning extremely odd. To begin with, they haven't at all succeeded in erasing the past.

It is not enough to spend ten lines of *The Right Approach* accounting for the Heath government, when week after week in the House of Commons we have been treated to the anguished confessions of Sir Keith Joseph and the embarrassed Tory front bench, when Barber has been repudiated, when Walker has been left out in the cold, and when most other major figures of the last Administration are either in retirement, or there on sufferance (like Maudling), or kept on as repented sinners (Whitelaw). Nor is it enough, although it may be wise, to dodge the issue of prices and incomes policy. *The Right Approach* says (and I quote): 'Experience does not suggest that this is the best way of finding a solution to the problem.' Ah, you say, this must mean that the Tories are against prices and incomes policy. But no. The next sentence of the document goes on: 'That same experience demonstrates the unwisdom of

flatly and permanently rejecting the idea.'

So far in the conference, and I say this without wishing to prejudice the success of Mrs Thatcher's speech, the Shadow Cabinet has largely failed to capitalise on the enormous opportunities presented to them by the current crisis. A typical figure (apart from Mr Dreary Neave) is James Prior. Slow of speech, with little to say excepting that the issue of trade union relations was the most difficult task ahead, Mr Prior was quite unconvincing in outlining the Tory answer to the social contract.

It therefore came as a welcome change when Mr Edward Heath, after all the anticipation, got up and paid his warm tribute to the unions – a tribute which preceded his declaration of confidence in Mrs Thatcher, and much exceeded it in length. What Mr Heath was pointing out, in his condescending remarks about *The Right Approach*, was precisely this tactical dodging of main issues. He put his finger on two – public expenditure cuts (about which the document is woolly) and the unions. In emphasising that the future was going to be extremely unpleasant, he threw down a gauntlet to the Thatcher team – a gauntlet which I hope Mrs Thatcher will be prepared to pick up.

For although Mr Heath was announcing his return to the fold, there was also, throughout his speech, a reminder that here was no prodigal son. 'Once again', said Mr Heath typically, 'I am telling you the truth.' No doubt he believes that telling the truth is what he is famous for in the country at large. No doubt he imagines that he is proverbially associated with veracity and plain-speaking, that lisping babes are taught in their mother's arms that Mr Heath never told a lie. Certainly, while one waited for him to get round to his tribute to Mrs Thatcher, it began at times to seem as if the old so-and-so was actually about to ask for his job back. As it turned out, however, he was only, with his constant, pompous, statesmanlike references to the world, asking for the job of Foreign Secretary.

Well, Mrs Thatcher needs a Foreign Secretary very badly indeed. She also, I should say, needs a Chancellor. She needs much more besides. Several of the speakers have pointed out how poorly the Tories are doing in the polls in comparison with what one might, under the circumstances, expect. But above all, Mrs Thatcher needs a better approach to the unions. The Labour Left is determined that, in or out of office, they will maintain their present close liaison with the TUC. The Tories don't like having the unions in the government, and keep saying that if the union leaders want to play politics they should stand for Parliament instead. Mr Prior was warm in the praise of a woman who said on Wednesday: 'If I've got to start bashing the unions in order to stop them bashing the country, then by Jove I am going to be the biggest bloody basher of the lot.' Mr Heath seems to think differently, and Mrs Thatcher is going to have to make up her mind on the matter. She may, as Mr Heath said, have a very short time to do so. She may have to await Mr Callaghan's pleasure. But if she wants office, she will have to be more forthright. Madame Chairman, I beg to oppose.

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Robert Neild*

Denis Healey's Rubicon

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's retreat with the Governor of the Bank of England from the VIP lounge at London Airport last week was plainly not what, in the language of war communiqués, is called a retreat 'according to plan'. Somehow, after he had set out from the Treasury, he was persuaded that events in the foreign exchange market required him to abandon his expedition to meet his fellow finance ministers and instead to take action that would please them from afar.

The significance of the action he took was not that he got some more money to prop up sterling. For some time it had been the Government's policy not to intervene in the foreign exchange market; and if he wished to modify that policy and judiciously to support the rate, there was still money enough for the purpose. Nor is the act of asking to borrow more from the lender of last resort one which in itself fills the financial world with confidence in a country visibly in heavy deficit.

Rather, the significance of the Chancellor's action is that the very making of an application of this kind to the IMF gives notice to the international financial com-

munity that he is now prepared to commit the Government to obey the canons of financial orthodoxy. What are these canons?

First, the readiness to pursue a policy of deflation, adherence to which is monitored quarterly by the IMF staff. Secondly, no new restrictions must be applied to imports, nor existing ones intensified. Although the major creditor countries have recently given *short-term* help to Britain without stringent conditions, they can be expected, following custom, to insist upon observance of these canons as we reach what, in their view, is a further stage of a rake's progress and seek money from the IMF. Of the two canons, the second is the more important. By subscribing to it the Chancellor ruled out protection in any form, although it is coming to be recognised as the only method, other than heavy deflation, of eliminating the present deficit in our foreign balance.

One can only guess why he chose to close his options so suddenly. Plainly he

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must have been persuaded that the very announcement he made, precisely because of its policy implications, would turn the sentiments of the financial community in his favour and hence would bring an improvement in sterling on the foreign exchange market.

That this was the significance of the decision the Chancellor had been persuaded to make, and that it weighed on him, is pretty evident from his remarks on the following day and from his speech to the party conference the day after. He violently attacked protection in words of uncharacteristic economic incoherence, loaded with military imagery and threats. General import controls, he said, would mean rioting in the streets, an increase in the cost of living, a fall in living standards and an increase in unemployment – propositions most of which do not stand up to a moment's scrutiny and all of which collapse if comparison is properly made with alternative policies.

He also said that in Cambridge it had been calculated that, in order to make protection work in the long run, it would be necessary to cut public expenditure by four or five times the amount he has already cut it. That, quite simply, is wrong. (Pedantic digression: in Cambridge, budget tightening, not necessarily by expenditure cuts, was reckoned to be necessary with any policy. In the case of protection, the amount needed was far less than the Chancellor's remarks suggest – unless, of course, his past expenditure cuts, which he used as a yard-



stick, are much smaller than they have been made out to be. Moreover, less tightening would be required with protection than without it, since protection permits higher levels of income and employment to be achieved with a given foreign balance and therefore generates more tax revenue, and lower spending on benefits, at given rates of tax and benefit.)

In response to the Labour Party conference's resolution saying that the loan would not be acceptable if it required further deflationary measures that would increase unemployment, the Chancellor declared, in a broadcast, that he did not think the IMF would require tighter fiscal and monetary policies than those he was pursuing in any case. That seems a rash statement to make.

To restore the foreign balance without recourse to protection requires the use of deflation and devaluation, in combination. Since we start from high unemployment, the better the response of trade to devaluation, the smaller the amount of fiscal and monetary tightening that is eventually required, and the higher the level of employment at which external balance can be achieved. So for there to be no need for any more unemployment would require, in some combination, that the budget was set sufficiently tight and that the volume of exports relative to imports was responding sufficiently favourably to devaluation. And it would require that the staff and members of the IMF were persuaded of this.

There can be no certainty in these matters, but there are, to say the least, strong grounds for doubting whether these economic conditions are fulfilled. At present, the measures introduced in the April Budget, in the form of deferred increases in income tax allowances, are having an expansionary effect. The restrictive effect of the July measures will not be felt until next year, and then only gradually. So the tightening of the budget stance has yet to come through. Meanwhile, the 'full employment balance' in the budget, which in many respects is the best measure, is much the same as it was in 1974. This might be all right if devaluation were steadily improving our foreign trade performance. But there is little evidence of that.

Devaluation, whether by fixed moves or a floating rate, is an effective instrument only so long as moderate changes in relative costs of production between competing countries bring about substantial changes in the relationship of exports to imports. Recent experience of exchange rate changes – for example, Germany and Japan upwards, and Britain and the United States downwards – suggest that this does not happen. Trade flows have obstinately refused to respond, and where they have responded, they have done so sluggishly and by little. If that is the case, the correction of a large imbalance in foreign trade, such as Britain suffers now, requires a very large effective devaluation, and that may be impossible to attain because of the adverse repercussions that a fall in the exchange rate has on wages, costs and prices.

The risk of this chain of events must have loomed large in the Chancellor's mind when, in the VIP lounge, he decided to take action to improve international confidence

in his policies. In so doing, he effectively acknowledged that there are strict limits to how far devaluation can be used. The direct implication of this is that to achieve external balance he must rely more on de-

flation now – or adopt protection. But in the very act of recoiling from devaluation he has rejected protection. Such is the trap into which he has jumped and from which there appears to be no escape.

David Haworth

Schmidt's Narrow Squeak

Classic advice for a foreign correspondent is 'always get your expenses in the first paragraph'. I have never previously taken or needed it, but a few days in West Germany just after the latest sterling crisis have had a shattering effect. It's an almost awesome experience to have an indifferent meal by the Rhine for the equivalent of £5.50, drink a whisky and soda (£1.35), and then go to a speech by Helmut Schmidt to hear his smug catalogue of German economic achievements in which he tries to persuade his audience they are not the new poor of Europe.

As the narrow result for the governing coalition showed, Schmidt found it an uphill task. With the exception of Sweden and Switzerland, he told them, you are the highest paid workers on the Continent, adding 'Where else can they boast of an inflation rate of only 4 per cent?' Where else, indeed? Yet the Germans are convinced they are still living in a recession. Despite all the unflattering comparisons Schmidt made during the campaign with the plight of the British and Italians, the electorate nearly ousted the Social Democrats because, among other reasons, the Germans simply do not believe they have never had it so good.

In the end the voters gave totally grudging assent for the coalition to continue, but on terms which make it very unlikely that the Government will last a full four-year term. And one surprise of the result was the number of first-time voters who opted for the Christian Democrats. Schmidt's party lost 7.7 per cent of the votes cast by the 18-25 age group – the same group which accounted for Brandt's success in 1972 – whereas the Christian Democrats gained some 5.7 per cent of these votes. This shows, perhaps, that the young in Germany have unquestioningly assimilated the jittery concerns of their parents about inflation and unemployment. This time around women deserted the Social Democrats in large numbers, worried by inflation. But not, it seems, by the unlovely appearance of Franz-Josef Strauss or the obviously slack grip Helmut Kohl has on economic facts and figures.

Both made considerable play of the recent Swedish government change: if 'creeping socialism', Swedish-style, is not to take hold in Germany then Schmidt must be rejected. To other eyes the German Chancellor does not look very socialist – certainly he is incapable of creeping – but the final result emphasised the political-geographic division of the country and also confirmed a move to the right which seems discernible elsewhere. In Germany the division between the

Protestant north and Catholic south, always there but usually understated, became clear: to the right in the south and to the left (the term is relative) in the north. It is the reverse of what seems in prospect on the rest of the continent – a string of unstable governments north of, say, Paris, seem to be facing a rightwards trend in their electorates as a possible reaction to the swing to the left in the south such as in Portugal and Italy.

At this stage such prognostication is necessarily tentative; but – if nothing else – social democrat leaders in Europe would seem to have less incentive than in the recent past to write to each other in relaxed and confident terms about the nature of their political philosophies. With uncertainty, defeat even, facing such men in Holland, Denmark, Belgium and only just avoided in Germany, there is little time for such luxuries. And Schmidt, almost as much as Kohl and Strauss, found it convenient to make unflattering reference to the communist world. Given his temperament and his country's colossal economic achievement, he could hardly do otherwise, but 'commie-bashing' might well become a renewed political fashion. At the final SPD rally in Essen, addressed by an exhausted Schmidt and a weirdly evangelical Brandt, the bashing became physical when a group of youthful left-wingers were thrown out. 'Take no notice of those communist monkeys,' said Schmidt, 'Let them go to the East where their mouths will be well and truly shut.' (Applause).

It was a sour campaign and it had a sour end. Schmidt, who was arrogantly off-hand throughout, did not have the grace to go to his party's headquarters for victory celebrations early in the small hours of Monday morning where his closest supporters were getting determinedly drunk. But then the political, even constitutional, difficulties he faces are daunting. He treated the whole election as if it was a tiresome distraction from the business of governing – rarely in contact with the crowds he addressed, looking bored when he wasn't speaking: the whole thing a chore rather than a duty, and privately he admitted as much.

Although there has been formal agreement between the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats to continue the coalition, it is questionable how long this arrangement can be continued. The confirmed Chancellor will be able to count on 221 members of his own party in the Bundestag plus 31 FDP parliamentarians which will give him an overall majority of only eight, compared with the 46 he enjoyed previously.

The FDP firmly rejected Herr Kohl's attempts after the election to switch their allegiance: with four of the most important portfolios in their pocket already, there didn't seem much point. The FDP chairman and Foreign Affairs Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, also rightly calculates that a formal change of loyalty would fatally discredit his party at the next election. But such agreement, while wise, cannot indefinitely bind all the FDP MPs. The party has a record of almost whimsical disloyalty. Since they remain instinctively in greater sympathy with big business than the SPD, it takes no imaginative effort – based on precedent – to foresee FDP MPs talked away one by one from their alliance with the Social Democrats. First, last and all the time, the FDP politicians are opportunist. Who knows what a late-night dinner in Bad Godesberg's political *salon*, the Maternus restaurant, might not buy?

The Free Democrats, and also the pollsters with their remarkably accurate predictions of the final result, are the real winners of the German election. The FDP has it in its power to thwart or compromise any legislation Schmidt might propose. It cannot be a cheerful prospect for the Chancellor but he knows better than anyone – and says so – that his Government will be judged in the coming year by the country's economic performance. Although it is difficult for anyone not a German to grasp, complacency over wealth is inextricably coupled with the fear that it might even in the smallest way be reduced. Yet, in British terms particularly, there are no real issues. The paper which announced on an eve-of-poll front page that 'the next Chancellor

of the Federal Republic will be called Helmut' captured the flavour of a pseudo-dramatic election. Certainly the traditional German neurosis about unemployment – there are currently one million jobless – played a part in the electoral reflex; but few other subjects inspired the debate which became personal and, ultimately, trivial.

If the result has no deep significance in domestic terms, it has preserved the country's profile internationally. The FDP Foreign Minister, Genscher, is an admired figure, especially in the European Community, and there is also bound to be relief that the CDU's promise of a return to Cold War attitudes in the end proved not to be the vote-catcher it was intended to be. But the Government's loosened power is bound to affect the way Germany looks at the EEC. Schmidt preaches a good sermon on the value of the Community, but has harsh and unwelcome comments to make about the way it works – or fails to. He feels the Community is costing Germany too much, but realises it would collapse without German support continuing at its present level. Hitting out at the EEC will again become politically good for Schmidt and he will do so at precisely the time the Common Market is groggiest – when it is contemplating enlargement in the knowledge that as the 'Nine' it has spectacularly failed to weather the economic and political storms of the last three years. Schmidt's victory was not negligible, but may turn out to be shorter-lived than his post-election boasts suggested. If that is the case, not only Germany but the whole of Europe will be in greater trouble than it dares to contemplate.

Bonn

Donald Woods

Detainees on Death Row

Commissions of inquiry appointed by the Nationalist Government are a common feature of the South African scene. Prime Minister Vorster is known to be highly sensitive about any suggestions of graft or an 'integrity gap' connected with his Administration, and has been quick to institute public inquiries to dig out the facts pertaining to any criticism of officials on this score. There have also been many commissions of inquiry connected with political issues, such as the recent Theron Commission on matters affecting coloureds and the current Cillie Commission into the causes of the Soweto riots.

But one inquiry a number of Mr Vorster's critics would much like him to initiate would be into the numbers of deaths of persons in detention. Since September 1963 no less than 25 South Africans detained without trial have died in captivity. The latest case occurred early last month, when 32-year-old Luke Mazwembe was found hanged in his cell only two hours after being detained by security police under the General Law Amendment Act. A police spokesman said that Mazwembe had torn the blankets in

his cell into strips in order to hang himself. He was the tenth detainee specifically said to have died by hanging. Barely a month before, 29-year-old Mapetla Mohapi, who had been detained without trial in July, died in his cell in prison in a little town called Kei Road. Police said he hanged himself with a pair of jeans. A post-mortem examination was conducted, at which two black doctors were allowed to be present. Both were later detained without trial and are still in detention.

The liberal *Daily Dispatch* newspaper has called for their release so that they can give evidence at the inquest into Mohapi's death, when it eventually takes place. In a front-page editorial headed 'J'accuse!' and signed by its editor, the *Daily Dispatch* said of the death of Mohapi:

When a man commits a crime for which he is charged, convicted and sentenced, then dies in custody for any reason other than neglect, torture or murder, no blame attaches to officials of the State. But when a man is detained without trial, then dies a violent death in captivity, his captors are automatically to blame for his death. Therefore today

we publicly accuse the captors of Mapetla Mohapi of being responsible for his death. Theirs is the guilt, and it is shared by every person in this country who supports the atrocity of detention without trial.

The newspaper also published on its front page a list of the deaths in detention. Here is the list, with the name of Luke Mazwembe added, and the causes of death stated by the authorities given in brackets.

L. Ngudle died in Pretoria on 5 September 1963 (suicide by hanging).

B. Merhope died in Worcester in September 1963 (causes undisclosed).

J. Tyitya died in Port Elizabeth on 24 January 1964 (suicide by hanging).

S. Salodjee died in Johannesburg on 9 September 1964 (fell seven floors during interrogation).

N. Gaga died in the Transkei on 7 May 1965 (natural causes).

P. Hoyer died in the Transkei on 8 May 1965 (natural causes).

J. Hamakwayo died in Pretoria in 1966 (suicide by hanging).

H. Shonyeka died in Pretoria on 9 October 1966 (suicide).

L. Pin died in Pretoria on 19 November 1966 (suicide by hanging).

A. Yan died in Pretoria on 5 January 1967 (suicide by hanging).

A. Madiba died in an undisclosed place on 9 September 1967 (suicide by hanging).

J. Tubakwe died in Pretoria on 11 September 1968 (suicide by hanging).

An unnamed person died in an undisclosed place on an undisclosed date in 1968 (death disclosed in parliament on 28 January 1969).

N. Nkgoathe died in Pretoria on 4 February 1969 (slipped in shower).

S. Modipane died in an undisclosed place on 28 February 1969 (slipped in shower).

J. Lenkoe died in Pretoria on 10 March 1969 (suicide by hanging).

C. Mayekiso died in Port Elizabeth on 17 June 1969 (natural causes).

M. Shivute died in an undisclosed place on 16 July 1969 (suicide).

J. Monakgotla died in Pretoria on 10 September 1969 (thrombosis).

I. Haron died in Cape Town on 27 September 1969 (fell down stairs).

M. Cuthsela died in an undisclosed place on 21 January 1971 (natural causes).

A. Timol died in Johannesburg on 27 October 1971 (leapt from tenth floor window during interrogation).

J. Mdluli died in Durban on 19 March 1976 (causes not yet disclosed; four policemen face trial).

M. Mohapi died in Kei Road on 5 August 1976 (suicide by hanging).

L. Mazwembe died in Cape Town on 2 September 1976 (suicide by hanging).

After publishing this list, the *Daily Dispatch* called on the Nationalist Government again to institute a full inquiry in these terms:

Perhaps the Government, often so ready to order commissions of inquiry into so many less important matters, would consider appointing a commission of inquiry into the abnormally high mortality rate among political detainees in this country. This would be in everyone's interest, because in matters political it is not unknown for today's prisoners to be tomorrow's rulers – and vice versa.

Alexander Cockburn

Keeping the Piranhas Waiting

It is probably best to think of the candidates, at this stage in the American presidential election, as two tired and desperate men stumbling along a narrow ledge overlooking a pool full of piranha fish. A couple of weeks ago – and you could tell it from the greenish look on the faces of his supporters – Carter seemed to be halfway off the ledge, with his feet only inches above the snapping jaws. As of the beginning of this week – and the bumble-stumble cycle accelerates all the time – it appeared to be the turn of Gerald Ford.

Carter, making a visible effort to pull himself together after the great *Playboy* fiasco, rendered himself less accessible to the piranha fish. That is, he said he would talk less frankly to journalists and instead directed their attention to President Ford, who has been trying to avoid the piranha fish altogether by scarcely venturing out of the White House. But hardly had Carter composed himself and substituted the theme of unemployment for that of Christian lust than he tripped up again, this time on the matter of taxing church property. With the exception of the churches themselves, Carter said he was all for such taxation. As a matter of fact he has much reason on his side. The amount of tax-exempt property owned by religious organisations in America is vast and consequently a burden on the wretched lay citizenry making up the shrunken tax base. (Some of these citizens become mail-order priests themselves in order to get round the problem.) Nonetheless Carter had made a first-class election stumble. Within hours of the publication of his remarks both Ford and his running-mate, Robert Dole, were painting an affecting portrait of the widows and orphans likely to be hurled from their snug sanctuaries – religious homes and hospitals – by the Georgian's callous proposal.

Carter had scarcely time to announce that he favoured better times for widows and orphans before all eyes and all piranha fish were once again directed at President Ford, who had been almost shouldered off the ledge by Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz. Most Americans still do not quite know what Butz said, having to be content with references to 'the coloureds' preference for good sex, comfortable footwear and a warm place to go to the bathroom'. But the accompanying panoply of words such as 'racist' and 'obscene', not to mention the denunciations of politicians across the country and a reprimand from Ford himself, persuaded everyone that what Butz said in front of John Dean (an act of culpable folly in itself) was very, very bad.

Ford then converted a stumble into an alarming lurch by waiting over the weekend before allowing himself to accept Butz's resignation. He was, of course, trying to balance out the risks of keeping the foul-mouthed racist in his cabinet against the opposing risks of offending the farm vote,

presumed to be attached to Butz. Even then Ford's stumble-cycle was not at an end. The very day before the debate on defence in San Francisco the general accounting office issued a report stating that the *Mayaguez*, one of Ford's proudest achievements, had been a pointless expenditure of American lives.

Thus the two bumble-waggon lurch forward. The only solution for the candidates is to restrict themselves to an ever-shrinking quota of statements, designed for maximum attraction and minimum repulsion – a sort of lowest common denominator of political discourse. Carter is for high employment, Ford against high inflation: Carter assails eight years of Republican misrule, Ford thunders against 20 years of Democratic big spending: Carter, affecting to shun reference to the subject, gets his partner Fritz Mondale to denounce Watergate, Ford... has a slight problem.

I had a sense some days ago of alarm in Carter's forces, when one of his Washington personnel wondered aloud why no journalist had adequately investigated Ford's role in the Watergate cover-up. Everyone knows that Ford pardoned Nixon. Few now remember that Ford, then Republican minority leader in the House, was almost certainly involved in squashing an early congressional investigation into Watergate. Ford categorically denied such a role when he was being confirmed as Vice-President in 1973. Six months later Nixon surrendered tapes which revealed him ordering his closest aides to urge Ford into protective action. Subsequent tapes for that period, which would doubtless confirm the extent of Ford's response, have never been released.

Carter's man in Washington was no doubt encouraged to raise such skeletons by the fact of a couple more stumbles by Ford: the investigation by the special prosecutor into campaign financing in Ford's home district, and the revelation that he has taken some paid holidays, courtesy of lobbyists from some of America's largest corporations. No 'smoking gun', in the form of something so gross as a cash bribe, has yet been found adjacent to Ford's person; but this does not quite dull the sound of discreet gunfire over the years, audible in the presence of most Congressmen and Senators anyway.

Ford, therefore, is not in markedly fine shape, as he nervously waits the September national unemployment figures which will be released at the end of this week. These figures could go a decimal point or two either way from the present 7.9 per cent. It is unlikely that he will find much in them to boast about. In terms of polls he is now about ten points behind Carter.

The proposition one is left with is obvious – that Ford cannot win the race and that it is a matter of Republicans hoping that Carter will lose it. What hopes have the piranha fish here? Generally, Carter's

famous ecumenism on matters of ideology has served him well. Senator Eugene McCarthy, running as an Independent and claiming 10 per cent support in the polls, remarked to me the other day that there are seven traditional subjects of demagoguery in American political life, usually divided between Republicans and Democrats. Carter, he said sourly, has used them all. McCarthy ticked them off forthwith: the welfare mess ('how can you have 20 million poor and not have a welfare mess?'), unemployment, taxes, the defence budget, big government and bureaucracy (as someone once said, a bureaucrat is a Democrat whose job some Republican wants), slackness in the State Department and finally insufficient zeal in prosecuting the anti-Trust laws.

If Ford, confronted with this dazzling demagogic equipment, cannot catch Carter on the issues, is there perhaps a skeleton about to crash from a Georgian closet? Carter, so emphatic about matters of honesty and elevation above the sordid bargains of American political-cum-business life, might prove a little more vulnerable here. He has confessed, haltingly, to enjoyment of some holidays and trips at corporate expense when Governor of Georgia. Earlier this week I was studying with interest a letter of his, of which a copy has remained in the Georgia state archives, addressed to a vice-president of Lockheed's Georgia subsidiary. In 1972 Carter had been flown down to Brazil on a Lockheed plane to promote his state and, as it turned out, to boost one of Lockheed's airplanes. 'I want to help,' wrote Carter apropos further promotion, 'in an active way, and delayed writing to you until I could investigate ways to do so. The first step now in addition to my public and private promotional efforts should be for me to visit Lockheed...' This kind of fulsome communication does not sound good in the year of the corporate bribe and, particularly if similar epistles are unearthed, could bring the piranha fish out of the water in a flurry of aggressive excitement.

It would be nice if there was a little excitement beyond the enunciation of lowest common denominators and quotations from the wisdom of Earl Butz. Fundamentally the campaign simply lacks razzmatazz. McCarthy says that this, of all years, is the time to run as a possibly wrecking Independent candidate, since there is so little to distinguish the two main contenders. Such relative similarity leads to dullness, as does one other all-important factor. For the first time both candidates are restricted to the expenditure of just over \$20m. each.

The result of this paucity of cash has been the even greater elevation of pollsters. With most of the existing campaign funds going into television advertising, only the pollsters can establish where this television advertising best be placed, or indeed which 'issues' the candidate would be wise to stress. Of course this scientific model blows up from time to time in a shower of computer print-outs, but the general trend is clearly visible and it does not make for great drama. More and more people may yet take the decision to vote for apathy and stay away from the booths altogether.

New York

News real.



Michael Prest

Curfew in the Land of the Inca Kola

The general was in deadly earnest. 'The point about the curfew,' he was solemnly quoted as saying, 'is that it strengthens the solidity of the Peruvian family.' Nobody was observed bursting into uncontrollable laughter. Certainly the virtues of family life in Peru as sanctified by church and state are less than humorous, but that was not why the remark was so gravely received. The reason is that the gap between official rhetoric and political reality has widened to a chasm. The natural flamboyance of Spanish political speech has conspired with the ideological muddle of Peru's ruling generals to generate a style of propaganda the whimsicality of which Lewis Carroll would have been proud.

What makes this possible is something which strikes the visitor to Peru – and especially to Lima – forcibly: the absence of news about either Peru or the outside world. Press censorship is almost total: a speech by the Archbishop of Lima ponderously assuring the people that if they unite the economic crisis can be overcome was printed at length on all front pages as the lead story, clearly selected by the Ministry of Information. Foreign news is confined to safe subjects like the Mars landing or the Chinese earthquakes, and judging from the pages and pages devoted to sport the Ministry of Information is convinced that a man is never more innocently employed than when engaged in a sweaty athletic pursuit.

Quite naturally, rumours proliferate. The credulous *gringo* is likely to be taken aside and informed most authoritatively that the currency will be devalued by another 30 per cent at the end of the month or that the Government has approached some of the landlords whose estates were expropriated five or more years ago and asked them if they would care to have their property back. Both stories may be true given the speed with which the generals are moving to the Right. But very few people know any better. A mood of frustration has therefore crept in: businessmen and bankers have lost whatever faith they may have had in the reforms proclaimed by the generals while the poor, crippled by 40-per-cent inflation and sensing that a chance of power is slipping from their grasp, grumble more and more audibly.

The pattern is common enough in South

America. But Peru is a bit different. The grandly named Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces which came to power in 1968 proclaimed a programme at once 'humanistic, Christian and socialist'. It nationalised major industries like oil, mining and fishing in the name of national independence and anti-imperialism (really anti-Americanism) and informed a slightly puzzled but willing people that 'participation' was at the heart of the new social order. The *conquistadores*, whose descendants had diligently kept alive the traditions of rapaciousness and arrogance during four centuries of rule, were swiftly demoted and the Incas installed as the authentic heroes of Peruvian independence. The economic development plan was promptly christened the 'Plan Inca' – not perhaps inappropriate considering that the most successful product of Peruvian industry is a sickly, evocatively yellow-coloured drink rejoicing in the name *Inca Kola*.

Participation was indeed a magic word which has given poor Peruvians a degree of self-respect they never had before 1968. The almost feudal relations existing previously on the great *haciendas* whose absentee owners dominated the country's life have been broken for ever. Unfortunately, it does not seem as though the redistribution of land to the peasants has been successful economically: a chronic capital shortage has prevented improvements to the land, and in the sierra at least agriculture is barely beyond the bullock and wooden-plough stage. Industry is no more encouraging. Productivity and quality are low despite 1976 being declared the Year of Productivity, and while trade unions are still legal, organisation is bureaucratic with the government dictating from above the nature and limits of 'participation'. Theoretically, workers and peasants exercise control over their jobs through the *comités* and *comunidades* into which they are organised. In practice the initiative is not theirs, and they are increasingly tempted to ask: 'Participation in what?'

On this central issue the gap between reality and rhetoric is opening as the Government starts to back-pedal vigorously on nationalisation and workers' control under pressure from foreign bankers and international aid agencies. For the rich this is a source of satisfaction, though it is hard to believe they ever faced the breadline. Their villas, straggling across Lima's suburbs in a tasteless and ostentatious medley of Hollywood and Spanish colonial baroque, contrast assertively with the slums in which most of the city's 3 million inhabitants live and from which the servants of the rich come. Their whole life-style proclaims a pro-Americanism strongly at variance with official nationalism.

What really separates the rich from the rest, however, is their relative immunity from the shortages and corruption that

plague everyday life. Peru is a paradigm of that law of contemporary social development which states that those countries which are most heavily bureaucratized are those which can least afford it. Shortages are exotic: car owners have been cursed by a complete absence of new number plates without which their vehicles are not allowed on the road; a famine of Coca-Cola and Fanta bottles led to a rule that a bottle of Coke cannot be bought to take away unless an empty bottle is proffered in its stead. The result is a black market in Coke bottles and a lot of thirsty Peruvians. The late summer saw flour disappear from shops in Lima. Few Peruvians believe the situation will improve, and many have a gut feeling that things have gone badly wrong.

Yet the state-of-the-nation speech, delivered on 28 July, the country's national independence day – always the political highlight of the year – by President Morales Bermudez, reiterated the old theme of unity, independence and participation. But the brutal fact is that the Government has no support from any important social group; wall daubings up and down the country are universally hostile, anonymous reminders that the mood of frustration has permeated the nation. Nobody expected the generals to work miracles, though many poor people did place their hope in the ousted General Velasco. Those hopes have been cruelly dashed. The old ruling class no longer holds the centre of the political stage and the people have tasted new freedoms. But as the balance within the army moves rightwards the reform-minded generals will find that their earlier policy of excluding the population from decisions under the guise of participation leaves them without friends.

Nevertheless, it is only fair to point out the obstacles confronting any reformist government in Peru. It is not a rich country, still heavily dependent on the world market price for commodities like copper, and its beautiful if forbidding terrain of desert mountain and jungle has always put a brake on economic development. The pace of social development, moreover, still lags far behind that of economic development. Peru remains a deeply conservative nation, in which a version of Catholicism scarcely superior to superstition is practised widely and male attitudes to women are the despair of female WASP tourists. Any group of reformers, let alone a somewhat improbable bunch of reforming generals, would have found the going tough regardless of the stance adopted towards the United States.

It is hard to see any alternative to a prolongation of the state of emergency and a tightening of the army's grip. That will be welcomed by Washington and the conservative forces within Peru. Social reform will fade like the Cheshire cat's grin into pure rhetoric. Then the common fear is that rhetoric will be superseded by good old-fashioned repression, for the heart has gone out of the reform movement, and even if General Bermudez wants to continue the participation programme he cannot enforce reform at gunpoint. With a twisted logic, substance appears to be triumphing over rhetoric. And most Peruvians seem to be resigned to further measures for the 'greater welfare of their families'.

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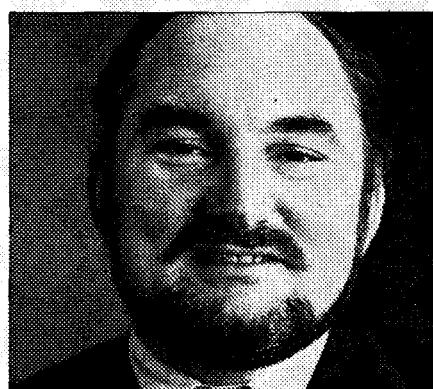
SUNDAY TIMES weekly review



DENNIS POTTER ON TELEVISION



BERNARD LEVIN ON THEATRE



ALAN BRIEN ON FILMS

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with special contributions.

EACH WEEK IN
THE SUNDAY TIMES

Profile: Lord Harlech

The PR Man

'Two former Speakers back voting reform' ran a headline in *The Times* the other day. It was hardly an earth-shattering story – Lords Maybray-King and Selwyn-Lloyd belonging firmly in the Westminster old crocks' show – but at least it offered its own form of assurance that the National Committee for Electoral Reform, born only last June, had not in the succeeding four months died through choking on its own silver spoon.

The silver spoon, of course, was the christening gift of Lord Harlech – the man who still trails 'a wisp of glory' from Kennedy's Camelot around with him and who, fresh from his PR triumph with the European cause, placed his name last summer at the head of the new campaign

for electoral reform in Britain. It is not, to be candid, so much a distinguished name as a glamorous one: in his political days Lord Harlech (or David Ormsby-Gore as he then was) never rose above being a minister of state and he has held no government office, apart from the sinecure one of being chairman of the British Board of Film Censors, since he ceased to be British Ambassador in Washington in 1965.

He remains, however, one of the few British 'worthies' to rate as an international celebrity. Naturally he owes this in part to his Kennedy connection – firmly cemented in the public mind when his newspaper-promoted 'romance' with Mrs Jacqueline Kennedy became the great non-story of

1968. But he also has something else going for him that is not commonly found among politicians (still less, among ambassadors). His own family life, like that of the Kennedys, may have been dogged by tragedy – his elder brother was killed in a car crash while he was still a schoolboy, his first wife died in the same way 30 years later and his eldest son was found dead in his flat only two years ago – but through it all he has managed to maintain a relaxed, almost bohemian, image. It would be unfair to call him 'raffish'; but certainly no one has ever accused him of being 'stuffy'. When two or three years ago he agreed to become the patron of one of the earlier British 'pop' festivals, it somehow seemed entirely in character – just as it did when after countless, misleading gossip column items he married as his second wife the London editor of the *American Vogue*.

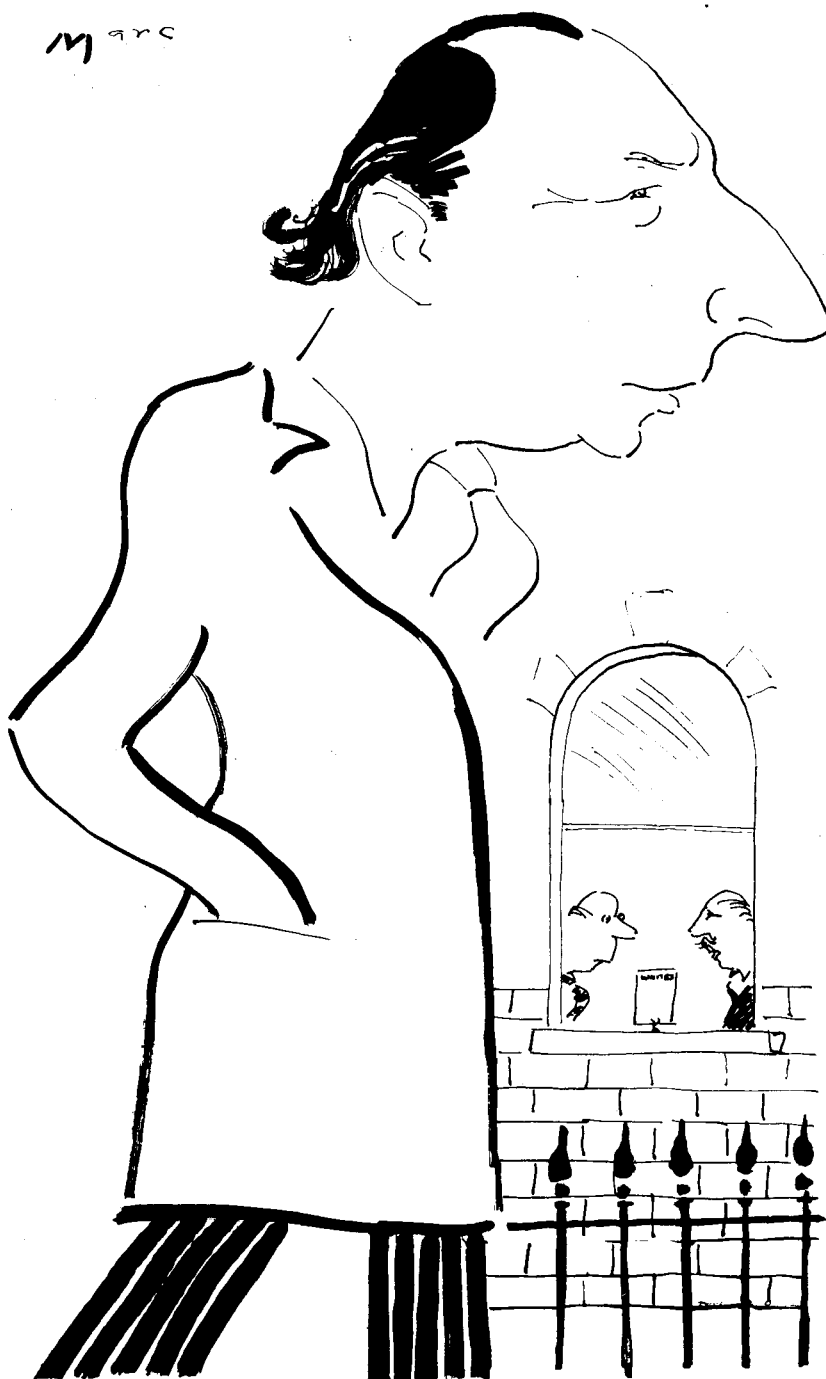
Curiously, however, he himself is very much a child of the Establishment. One of the best pieces of period copy to survive from the pre-1939 lost world must be this story which appeared on the social page of *The Times* just three weeks before war broke out:

MR DAVID ORMSBY-GORE'S COMING-OF-AGE

A presentation by tenants of the Glyn estate, owned by Lord Harlech, took place at Talsarnau, Merionethshire, to mark the 21st birthday of Lord Harlech's son and heir, the Hon. David Ormsby-Gore. The gift was an ancient clock and it was handed over by Mr R. Jones Morris. Several farmers on the estate expressed their good wishes in Welsh and English and Mr Daffyd Roberts of Dolgelly sang songs specially composed for the occasion with harp accompaniment by Mr David Roberts of Barmouth, who is blind. All the tenants were entertained at tea in a marquee.

A historical relic of that kind is more than a mere curio: it is also a cameo of what the Tory Party was once like. For the present Lord Harlech's father was not simply a paternalistic Welsh landowner; he was also, for 28 years, a Conservative MP, a cabinet minister who served both Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain – and, even more important, a collateral connection of both the Cecils and the Cavendishes. Today the dynastic contacts go even further, for David Harlech's sister, Katharine, is married to Maurice Macmillan, thus giving Harlech in his days in government (and as an ambassador) a rare and direct route to the then Prime Minister. If the three great Tory clans are the Cecils, the Cavendishes and the Macmillans, then David Harlech can be said to stand at a point where all three roads meet. Twenty, even ten, years ago that in itself would have given him a claim to the Tory leadership; and there are those who believe it could still have happened – even as late as February 1975 – but for one, unilateral decision of Harlech's own.

It was a decision taken in Washington, and perhaps not at the most propitious of times. When John F. Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963 the bottom fell out of Harlech's world. He had, after all, only been appointed Britain's Ambassador (though whether by Kennedy or Macmillan has never been quite clear) because of his close friendship with the President – a



friendship that made him the envy and the despair not only of all other ambassadors in Washington but also of some of President Kennedy's own cabinet members. He had never, however, liked Lyndon Johnson and liked him even less once he was forced to listen to interminable, maudlin monologues about 'our mutual, beloved departed friend'. Inconveniently, it was precisely at this low moment for Harlech's spirits that his father died, thereby confronting him with the inescapable choice of whether to succeed to the family title or boldly to renounce it. The question was endlessly debated in various Georgetown drawing-rooms and for some time it seemed the decision could go either way. Eventually, however, with Labour now back in office in Britain, Harlech took the easy option: he would, he decided, accept his fate and go to the House of Lords.

Since then David Harlech has really only operated on the periphery of Tory politics – indeed he was to be heard at a fringe meeting at the Liberal Assembly last month questioning whether the description given of him as 'a life-long Conservative' would any longer be accepted by Mrs Thatcher's Tory Party. He did make one false start at getting back into the political mainstream when he briefly became deputy leader of the Tory peers in 1966 but it was a job he felt compelled to relinquish (without too much evident regret) when the television consortium assembled under his name was awarded the franchise for Wales and the West in 1967. He again had some hopes in 1970 – encouraged by Lord Butler – that Ted Heath might invite him back and possibly even make him in the fullness of time Foreign Secretary in succession to Lord Home; but nothing came of that either. Today, his relationship with the leadership of the Tory Party is probably best defined as 'loose' – looser probably even than that of his friend and electoral reform ally, Roy Jenkins, with the current Labour Establishment. Harlech has not even discussed electoral reform with Margaret Thatcher and there are those who, knowing how she bridles at the barest mention of the topic, suspect that that may be just as well.

For there is no disguise about what Harlech wants. In talking about electoral reform – or, more specifically, proportional representation – he confesses to being 'bored' with mathematical calculations about what this or that scheme might have produced in terms of parliamentary seats at the last election: he is, he hastens to explain, concerned 'with 'politics not with mathematics'. PR could, he insists, 'change all the contours of Britain's political geography'. Rather than being content to squeeze into power with 37 per cent of the total vote, parties, he argues, would be forced under PR to try to meet the interests of uncommitted voters rather than slavishly follow the dictates of their own devotees. And that, he asserts, with the all-pervasive smile of non-partisan goodwill that always characterises the man of the Centre, 'must surely be for the benefit of democracy'.

Mrs Thatcher, of course, sees things quite differently. To her politics is a matter of competing ideologies – and nothing is to

be gained by fuzzing the edges or smoothing the corners; but not all Conservatives are angular people and a number of them seem bound to find Lord Harlech's approach altogether more comfortable than hers. In that sense, far from being any sort of ally, Lord Harlech represents Mrs Thatcher's most insidious enemy. For there is an easy plausibility to his appeal, especially when delivered to the business backers of a party that (at least until Mrs Thatcher's arrival on the scene) never gave much pride of place to ideology. Any member of Mrs Thatcher's entourage inclined to regard Lord Harlech as a nuisance rather than a threat should examine the names of the industrialists and businessmen he already has marching under his banner: a roll-call that includes figures as Lord Plowden of Tube Investments, Sir Joseph Lockwood of EMI,

Mr Joseph Rank of Ranks Hovis McDougall – to say nothing of Sir Ralph Bateman, the former chairman of the CBI – cannot help having a minatory ring to it, not least to those responsible for the Tory Party's treasure chest.

Which makes it all the odder that the press, which chatters on endlessly about Labour 'splits', has barely even touched on this deeper and far more fundamental divide within the Tory Party. Lord Harlech is certainly not a malicious – or even perhaps a disappointed – man; but someone described by President Kennedy as 'the brightest man' he had ever met must surely be bright enough to realise that the logical implication of the propaganda cause to which he has now set his hand can only be the destruction of Mrs Thatcher and all her works.

Jeremy Bentham

Invisible Influence

Sir Denis Dobson, KCB, OBE, QC: not a household name, even to the modest extent that, for example, the Rt Hon. Lord Elwyn-Jones is a regular topic of breakfast-time conversation. But the Lord Chancellor does at least possess a public persona as a minister of the Crown, even if (unlike his predecessor, Lord Hailsham) he seems not to be a man who would revel in seeing his name in neon lights. Sir Denis, Permanent Secretary to three successive Lord Chancellors since 1968, has virtually no public persona at all. And quite right too, so long as we accept obsessive civil service anonymity as the concomitant of a cherished doctrine of individual ministerial responsibility. However, we know from the Crossman *Diaries*, even if we did not know before, that senior civil servants are often formidable characters in their own right. Sir Denis may not be so colourful as the famous 'Dame'; his department, by its very nature, is unlikely to be such a political battlefield as one which deals with housing and planning; but observers of legal phenomena are entitled to ask some pertinent questions about those administering a far-flung empire comprising nearly 10,000 officials, whose functions range upwards from the parochial minutiae of local court administration to the appointment of senior judges.

In 1914 the number of administrative staff answerable to the Lord Chancellor was 1,580; the Lord Chancellor's office itself, then no more than the Chancellor's personal secretariat in the House of Lords, together with the Crown Office, comprised just ten officials. The administrative apparatus gradually grew, partly through the expansion of business passing through the courts, partly because of bureaucratic boundary adjustments (for example, bringing county court administration under the Lord Chancellor's umbrella), and partly through innovations such as the setting up of more administrative tribunals. In 1969 the Beech-

ing Royal Commission on Assizes and Quarter Sessions recommended that the chaotic mish-mash of overlapping administrative responsibilities between the Lord Chancellor's department, the Home Office, the then Ministry of Public Building and Works, and local authorities, be rationalised under the overall charge of the Lord Chancellor. On 1 July 1975 the non-industrial strength of the latter's office stood at 9,906, and it is still growing.

In 1918 the Haldane Committee on the Machinery of Government recommended the creation of a Ministry of Justice by rejigging the functions of the Lord Chancellor and the Home Secretary. The idea never caught on, though it has been the subject of sporadic and sometimes emotional debate ever since. The implementation of Beeching, coupled with the setting up of the Law Commissions in 1965, has gone some way to appeasing the unquiet spirit of Haldane, but two of the most sensitive issues associated with the Lord Chancellor's job – his powers to appoint (among others) judges, JPs and tribunal chairmen, and his own right to sit as the presiding judge in the House of Lords – are still often discussed.

And it is in areas like this that one's curiosity is most aroused about the role of the civil servant. The Lord Chancellor himself scores over his ministerial colleagues by having professional skills directly relevant to his job; but every constitutional guru agrees that he simply has much too much to do. Much of his work, including vast powers of patronage, must devolve in practice to administrators. And this brings us back to the faceless Sir Denis, exercising powers which are of central importance to the processes of law and justice, and accountable to no one but his minister. We have no cause to think he does the job badly: he cannot be blamed for occasional judicial aberrations. But we have no real evidence of how he goes about his appointed tasks, or of where the buck really stops.

Peter Wilby

The Trouble with Numbers

A couple of years ago, national alarm that schoolchildren couldn't read led to a Government inquiry into literacy (the Bullock Committee). Now, it seems, they can't add up either – still less subtract, multiply or divide. A comprehensive head writes in the Inner London Education Authority journal, *Contact*, that only 72 out of 240 11-year-olds entering his school could divide 6 into 102, and that only eight (yes, 8) could subtract £4.47½ from £13.24. A Staffordshire child psychologist discovers that, at eight comprehensive schools, the majority of fourth-year boys are unable to multiply 6 by 8, 9 by 7 and 12 by 11. The Director of Education for Berkshire reports to his committee that only 11 out of 52 secondary schools in the county are satisfied with the standards of arithmetic among children coming from primary schools.

'Understanding is now the prime motive of mathematics learning', wrote a college of education lecturer in *Contact* last month. Yet understanding is precisely what employers, particularly in the engineering industry, complain that school-leavers lack. Asked to multiply 0.50 by 0.25, their answers range from 1,250 to 125. 'I never did understand decimal points. They spoil good numbers', is said to be a frequent reaction when the improbable largeness of the answers is pointed out. Many employers now put all their craft apprentices through several weeks of intensive remedial work in maths before normal training is started.

Can we blame the new maths that is taught in the schools? (A misnomer: most of the maths was known to the ancient Greeks, it is just a new way of teaching it). The answer, as Patrick Moore would say of life on Venus, is that we just don't know. We are even uncertain how many schools teach modern maths – according to some estimates, it is only a quarter in the primary sector, with another half using a mixture of new and old methods.

The working methods (if such they can be called) of young apprentices frequently seem to reflect the banishment of multiplication tables from schools. Invited to multiply 7 by 7, they double 7 to make 14, double again to make 28, double again to make 56 and then subtract 7 to get the answer. (Needless to say, it isn't always the right answer). But, at a conference at Brunel University last week, a representative of the Training Services Agency, which runs skill courses for the unemployed, said that numerical incompetence was common to all ages. He suggested that the BBC ought to follow its adult literacy with an adult numeracy project – and, in fact, some of the literacy units are already, in response to consumer demand, teaching maths as well as reading.

Attempts to compare the maths attainments of different age groups are, in any case, irrelevant to the main issue: are current school approaches to maths equip-

ping today's pupils with the numerical skills that *they* will need? The trouble with much of the new approach to maths is that it was invented by people who wanted to transmit their enthusiasm for the subject but who had no understanding of the practical needs and limitations of pupils and teachers.

Maths is an intellectual discipline of such fascination and purity and elegance that those who have studied it at an advanced level frequently argue that it is as essential to the growth of a child's aesthetic sensibilities as literature or art. To them, the endless calculations of corner-shop food prices that induced hatred and boredom in generations of pupils were acts of philistine vandalism. They wanted to convince the world that maths was fun. But maths is also a basic tool needed in all walks of life. (It is not just engineering employers and shopkeepers who complain about the lack of numerical skills among school leavers; teachers of chemistry, physics, economics and engineering, in universities, polytechnics and schools, do so, too.) And, if the tool is to be mastered, it requires practice and repetition and application, inside and outside school.

Here is Mr Brian Jackson, a prominent educational pundit, writing in the *Sunday Times Magazine* in 1973: 'Yesterday's children learned tables, mental and mechanical arithmetic, the four rules of number, and the computation of English weights, measures and money . . . But, today, a 7-year-old might expect to learn about number patterns, number bases, estimation, symmetry, sets, congruence, conservation, prob-

ability and statistics.' Jolly good fun and, according to Jackson, it all started with Sputnik and is supposed to give them the maths that will enable them to travel to the stars when they grow up. But, in the meantime, what happens when they go with Mum to the local supermarket? Modern educational thinking is supposed to stress the importance of continuity between what happens in school and what happens outside. Yet modern maths reduces parents (unless they happen to be computer programmers) to the role of baffled onlookers, dependent on Sunday newspapers to explain what is going on in their children's classrooms.

Worse still, even the teachers are far from comfortable with modern maths. Some of the best-known new maths systems – Nuffield maths, for example – are not in the form of step-by-step syllabuses, with clear indications of what skills children should have mastered at each stage, but 'do-it-yourself' guides for teachers, collections of ideas rather than teaching and learning schemes. Merely to grasp some of the ideas presented requires a firm grounding in secondary maths.

Mrs Ruth Rees, of Brunel University's Department of Education, had some startling statistics for last week's conference there; she had tested over 100 students training for primary teaching (all of whom will have to teach maths) and found that only 17 per cent understood how to calculate the area of a circle and less than half were able to calculate 7/16 correctly to two decimal places. Their scores on a 50-item test were substantially worse than those of children studying for GCE Ordinary level. That isn't surprising, when you consider that only about 40 per cent of entrants to teacher training colleges have an O-level maths pass.

The result is what Mrs Rees calls a 'teaching-learning cycle' – qualified teachers are passing on their mathematical difficulties to children who will, in turn, pass them on to the next generation. Whether new or old maths is used (but, particularly, I suspect, if the new is used) innumerate teachers will create innumerate children. It is nothing short of ludicrous that trainee teachers now require two A-level passes but need never take O-level maths – a characteristic aspect of a society that is preoccupied by high-level and frequently irrelevant academic paper qualifications, yet fails to ensure that all its citizens acquire the basic skills essential for survival.

But, you may ask, what about the calculator revolution? Has the pocket calculator not put an end to the drudgery of mechanical computation? Can't arithmetic now be left to machines? Alas, no: calculators go wrong, for one thing, and, more important, they aren't the slightest use if you don't know where to put your decimal point in the first place. Calculators can confuse, too. Any user knows that, if you divide 56 by 6 and multiply it by 6 again, you will not get the answer 56. (You will get 55.99999). In any case, it's *still* simpler to learn 6 times 8 by heart than to dive into your pockets for a calculator every time. The purpose of education is to make Man the master of his environment, not its slave.



Brighton Diary

□ Hitchens's Law states that a politician who allows his policies to seem as if they are dictated by those of another party will fail with his own (cf. Jenkins, Prentice, Nutting, Boyle). What really did for Edward Heath was the feeling that Tories could not say what they thought about Labour and the unions, but had always to have 'responsible' concordats with them. No such atmosphere at Brighton this week. The very first speaker announced that we already lived in a socialist state. Central Office *Speakers' Notes* always used to suggest that orators refer to Labour as 'the socialists' but it never caught on. Nowadays, every tyro orator gets it into every sentence and makes it sound sibilant. The stupid party has found an ideological cement. What seems to have escaped the talking classes – assembled here in such droves to report every murmur – is that for the first time since 1951 the Tories are the party most committed to changing the way we live now. At the next election, the people who want a quiet life will vote Labour and trust to Jim.

□ When a Labour MP is asked an embarrassing question about the monarchy at a public meeting, his usual form is to avoid attacking the Queen but to inveigh against the 'hangers on'. Just so with the Conservatives, who must needs criticise 'the team' which makes up our dingy and obscure shadow cabinet, but durst not include the leader in their strictures. She gleams like a marvellous cultured pearl across the conference hall, and everybody accuses me of being perverted for finding her sexy. (It was exciting to discover that the literal German for her role is *Führerin von der Britische Konservative Partei*.) The strange thing, on first consideration, is the slightly bitchy attitude which senior Tory ladies adopt when the *Führerin's* name comes up. They tend to say 'Oh but I think she's terribly strong and good' in the same tone of voice you would expect if they were having an affair with her husband. The explanation is not, however, very difficult (how could it be?). I shall not say which *grande dame* hissed in my ear: 'Look darling, it's perfectly simple. With a male leader our charms are noticed. With this little number we might as well be wearing oatmeal sacks.'

□ Enoch Powell's attitude to non-white citizens is, I dare say, more subtle than that of Mr Earl Butz. The attitude of his supporters is not, and he knows it. That is why he is a vile demagogue. It must have taken some skill for the party managers to find a civilised resolution for the immigration debate on Tuesday; out of the 139 submitted almost all regarded immigrants themselves as 'the problem'. That morning in the *Daily Telegraph* the 'intellectual' Maurice Cowling had instinctively referred to 'softness towards criminals, immigrants and the deliberately idle'. At a couple of points in the debate, one caught the unmistakable sound of middle-class droogs ratt-

ling their cages. But it was hard for them to contest the delightfully ultra-British Indian speakers who reminded everybody of the Muggeridge dictum that the only real Englishmen left are turbaned and living in Poona. Major Marindar Saroop, Tory candidate for Greenwich, was not called to speak. But I overheard a conversation about him, between two people who are normally sworn enemies of the public sector borrowing requirement. 'Saroop would be more expensive to repatriate' said one. 'We'd have to pay his subscription to the bloody Calcutta cricket club.'

□ Another triumph for the platform has been the prominence given to speakers from the stage army of Conservative trade unionists. You can get away with any banality you like as long as you wave your union card (though there are other parties where this is also true). Jim Prior is widely regarded as a softie for accepting the closed shop, and most delegates seem to believe simultaneously that the working class is (a) greedy and (b) dying to vote Tory. At a party some time ago, Mrs Thatcher met Tom Jackson of the Post Office workers and took a stern line with him about the obduracy of the TUC. After listening courteously for a bit – the party was thrown by the *Economist*, who value their moderates – Jackson muttered that she didn't understand ordinary people. 'Don't give me that Mr Jackson' came the cut-glass reply. 'For the first ten years of my life I lived in a house with no inside toil . . . lavatory.' 'Yes,' boomed the whiskered leader 'and when you'd finished that, I had another ten years to go.' Everybody here says things have got much better since then.

□ The drafting of *The Right Approach* represents a limited victory over Keith Joseph (may his right hand lose its cunning) by the spring-heeled Christopher Patten, head of Tory research. It is sufficiently full of ambiguities to satisfy the Bow Groupers and to disconcert supporters of 'the mad monk', as even his entourage affectionately call him. After the Selsdon Group (who think the facts of life are socialist) had attacked the new programme, Joseph rang up and asked to see them. On arrival, their representative was asked: 'What was it you wanted to talk to me about?' The baffled freedom fighter left the meeting with the impression that Joseph had funked delivering a rebuke from on high. Certainly, when he was asked at a recent Tory seminar whether he felt like saying a few words on the record of the last Tory cabinet, Sir Keith buried his head in his hands with a groan and did not utter. His friends are starting to worry.

□ Now that Labour has abandoned the tenets of social democracy, it is agreeable for some people to find the dead ground occupied by the Young Conservatives. Their current platform includes demands for import controls and a halt to public expenditure cuts. One of their young economists, Richard Bull by name, has worked out that if you take the new Tory manifesto at its word, and assume that one borrowed pound in five means a 20-per-cent reduction of public spending, and then add in all the

things (cops, armaments) on which the Tories say that *more* should be spent, you wind up with a 15-20-per-cent slash in services. This is probably why no Conservative has yet found the guts to say where the axe would fall. The thing about monetarism and budget-balancing is that it sounds so like commonsensical good housekeeping. But we have been warned. Mr Bull was upset that *The Times's* report on his new pamphlet was not pinned up on the conference press-clippings board. I thought of trying to recruit him to the Labour Party but, off the top of my head, couldn't think of anything with which to woo him.

□ Sir Geoffrey Howe was one of Heath's most dismal and catastrophic ministers. He remains an outstandingly wet public speaker. He is also a poor scholar. Replying to Tuesday's economic debate, he quoted Walter Bagehot with approval as having said 'I can conceive of nothing more corrupting than that two combinations of men should constantly offer to defer to that decision (of the voter) and compete for the office of executing it.' As it happens, what Bagehot actually said was 'I can conceive of nothing more corrupting or worse for a set of poor ignorant people than that two combinations of well-taught and rich men should constantly offer to defer' etc. So that is what the Tories think of us – but are too mealy-mouthed to say out loud. The rest of Howe's speech was all about how the Thatcher regime would cut prices, lower taxes, increase employment, raise take-home pay and expand home ownership. I missed great chunks of it, which were drowned out by the roar of pigs flying in tight formation overhead.

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

□ Racial characteristics heavily handicap the Japanese rugby union football team at present touring the United Kingdom. The lack of weight in the scrumage and height in the line-out suggest that it would be more in keeping with the British sense of justice and fair play if the players selected, especially at forward, in the teams playing our guests were limited in weight and height more nearly to the weight and height of their Japanese opponents. – Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (R. P. T. Hines)

□ Said Mr Tibbitt: 'I used to be an amateur weather forecaster, but I went professional because I used to get so many calls from cranks and people who wanted to know when to hang out the washing. There is no doubt in my mind that Mr Callaghan is responsible for the lack of rainfall.' – *Portsmouth Evening News* (Peter Bolton)

□ Mrs Shirley Williams, the only woman left in Mr Callaghan's cabinet, said: 'I don't think Mr Callaghan is a male chauvinist. In the cabinet I am treated like one of the boys.' – *Sun* (R. Coldwell)

□ The Sons of Divine Providence. Vacancy for Supervisor. Molesey Venture, Orchard Lane, East Molesey, Surrey. – *Observer* (Kathleen M. Davies)

University Forum

Peter Butterworth*

NUS – Your Union?

Mao Tse-tung might have been interested to hear that political power does not come only from the barrel of a gun but also from the price of an all-inclusive holiday to Athens. At least that might be his conclusion if he knew that a cut-price war in travel service and discounts had become the curious ground for the first battle for student power between the National Union of Students and the new national organisation for students called the British Student Association which was launched in London on Tuesday. At a time when the NUS are running their biggest campaign ever, against education cuts, an attempt to split the student movement must be taken seriously. Moreover, it is NUS's own alleged mishandling of their huge resources that has provided this opportunity for the most concerted right-wing threat to their position for five years. This week's events also show just how much students have become big business and how little they know of their own national union's financial affairs.

The two guiding lights of the new BSA are Tony Brown and Leonardo Martini-Brown; they were also both leading members of the Students for Representative Policies Group which last year tried and failed to introduce direct elections to the NUS national executive, replacing the present structure whereby most delegates to NUS conferences are elected at union meetings. The Browns, who are not related, argue that these meetings are attended only by a minority of activists and that just as in the trade union movement 'Activists' Democracy' favours the most motivated and organised groups, which in the case of the NUS are on the Left. The executive thus becomes unrepresentative of the mass of students' political opinions. Needless to say, both of the Browns are fiercely anti-communist.

Frustrated by the present NUS constitution from introducing these changes and also by the frequent failure of Leo Brown to be elected NUS Treasurer, the Browns have decided to go it alone with their own union even in the face of criticism from some of their colleagues on SRP. Neither of them are full-time students any longer. They have been reluctant to disclose the sources of the initial capital which launched BSA, although the wealthy Tony Brown works for Lloyds on political risk insurance and may personally have the industrial contacts willing to help. If BSA is successful, of course, money will come in from the travel service arranged with the Student Travel Bureau and also from subscriptions.

Whatever the motives and wisdom of

BSA, they have provided a serious and effective critique of the financial record of NUS Services Ltd, the holding company for four NUS-owned companies in travel, insurance brokerage, printing and marketing. Two self-evident failures stand out – the actual overall loss of £310,000 between 1970 and 1975 and the sacking of 40 NUS travel staff last month. It is through the holding company's board that the whole services organisation becomes answerable to the National Executive Committee and in turn to the national conference. But although the accounting year ends in May and the accounts were probably approved by their auditors, Arthur Andersen & Co, by late August, delegates do not see the accounts until one day before the conference begins. No motions are allowed to be put at the conference: only questions may be asked and answered. BSA claim that ratepayers are subsidising an inefficient and uncompetitive student company through the union's general fund, which consists of £450,000 from local authorities paid on behalf of students as subscriptions. Contributions vary according to the type of college and type of student, full- or part-time.

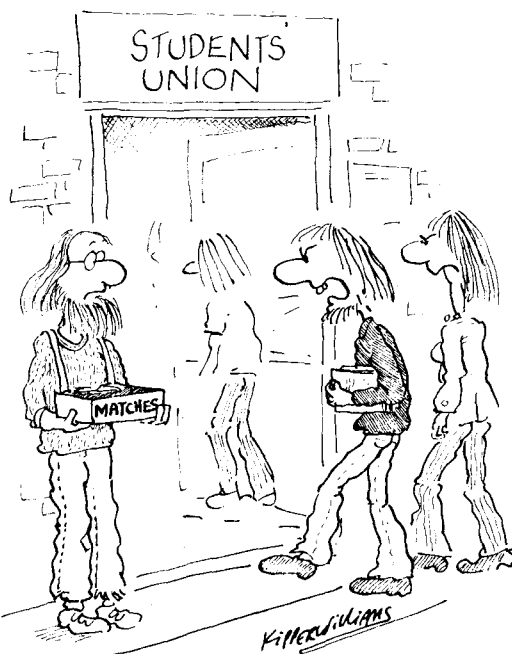
Financially, NUS travel has been the least successful of their several ventures. It has made consistent losses through the Seventies and £350,000 since May 1974 alone. BSA's allegations of mismanagement are backed up by the cheaper rates of air fares that they have so far announced. But as Chris Morgan the NUS Treasurer argues, it is not good enough, on the basis of comparative fares for only three main routes, to say that if a private company such as Students Travel Bureau

can provide services cheaper than the NUS, the NUS must be inefficient. Some routes within a travel service are bound to be more profitable than others. BSA argue that out of political rather than commercial motives, the NUS run flights to eastern bloc countries. More seriously, BSA criticise the long-term allocation of resources and staff within the different services, believing there to have been too much concentration on travel. The economic climate has not been favourable to student travel in recent years and some private firms – like British Student Travel Centre for instance – have collapsed. BSA conclude that the increase of NUS staff in travel from 50 in 1968 to around 250 in 1973 was not justified by the real increase in student travel. The recent sacking of travel staff seems to support this argument.

The man in control of the NUS services empire, based in Cheltenham, is the managing director Michael Naylor, who was appointed in January 1973. Most of the commercial decisions made by the NUS emanate from him; he is said to be a man of dedication and energy who commands great loyalty from his large staff. His salary is difficult to assess since it is drawn from the individual services, but judging from the various accounts it is probably well over £20,000. It was his decision to take over the Cheltenham printers Stoate and Blackwell as part of the expansion of the NUS printing firm, Photomech Ltd, and also to move the services offices to Cheltenham at a cost of £25,000. The staff involved in printing is only about one tenth of that involved in travel. Their small losses of £65,000 in two years have been covered by the success of Endsleigh Insurance and are partly attributable to the concessionary rates given to the NUS and other student unions.

Insurance brokerage is the big success in NUS Services and has kept its sister companies alive. This year they hope to have made a profit of £100,000, almost double the amount made right through the Seventies with the notable exception of the last financial year. In that year (May 1974-75), on a commission income of over £1m., a considerable increase on the previous year, Endsleigh made a loss of over £11,000 after tax refunds. The explanation for this again appears to be over-expansion. The annual report records that Endsleigh salesmen, using 75 cars, covered four million miles in the year which means that, despite having 45 regional offices, they must have averaged 1,000 miles a week in pursuit of commissions and policy buyers. Given fuel prices this seems an extraordinary use of Endsleigh's money.

It is impossible to judge whether the BSA personnel might have run the NUS better in the past five years, but the NUS themselves do admit that costly mistakes have been made in the drive to expand. The mix of redundancies, overdrafts, directors' salaries and leftist politics is an unhappy one. It may be a sign of the times that the NUS's new rival has chosen to emphasise prices and not politics first. Still, the day of judgment must come when the BSA will have to fight on their political beliefs. When the debate becomes not a question of who takes you to Milan cheaper, but of whose policies are more attractive, the real battle will start.



'Careerist!'

*Peter Butterworth studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies and has just finished as news editor of Sennet, the newspaper of the University of London Union.

First Person

Arthur Marshall

Suffer the Little Children

As the good Dr Kissinger continues to flash, like some adult Puck or chunky Shakespearean fairy, now here, now there, over hill, over dale, thorough African bush and political briar, one is yet again filled with admiration for the remarkable country (and I don't mean Germany) from which he comes. History's pages aren't exactly studded with instances of one nation being helpful, or even polite, to another. Portugal is, as we know, 'our oldest ally', but who ever got a crumb of comfort out of this gossamer relationship? Cynical persons bent on finding unworthy motives in all human behaviour, have had in the past a high old time putting a smear on American post-war generosity. We all know, of course, about the Russian world threat and all that, but it would be agreeable for once to notch up a few votes of thanks from those of us who admire American altruism. It must, I suppose, be purely coincidental that, of all countries, Americans are the most consistently church-going and Bible-reading. How very naïve of them, but something must have made them what they are. But there, it is fashionable to sneer at the good, though in our Devon village we're so far behind the times that we tend to admire them (odd, too, how catching goodness and kindness are). Smug of us, no doubt.

But away with this Pollyanna mood and

cheer up, for I'm moving on to a harsh vote of censure. It is said that anything unfortunate that happens in America (gangsterism, chewing-gum, drugs, Colorado beetles) takes a decade to cross the Atlantic and a further decade for us to become aware of it here, and I suppose it was about ten years ago that we all began to notice that schoolchildren, fresh from the football terraces and full, as like as not, of booze, were busy knifing each other, wrecking telephone kiosks, stealing, tripping up old ladies, and replying to the slightest of reproaches with a pursing of their baby lips and a crisp 'Bugger off!'

I lay much of the blame for this at the feet of Americans and the deplorable example they have set in the past. Their corporate adoration of children is nauseating and has been so for years. They even find the children's resulting indiscipline in some way engaging and 'cute' ('Why Junior, if you keep kicking Momma's teeth in, Momma is going to have to go get herself a plate'). There must be something parentally unsound about a nation that cooed with idiotic joy when 'the world's sweetheart', Mary Pickford, played (though against her will, but dollars are dollars) Little Lord Fauntleroy at the advanced age of 27 (they made the furniture half as big again, and hired lamp-post-size fellow artistes so that she would appear more wee and appealing). Her golden curls, set on a grown-up frame, had already bobbed their way to fame in a variety of pre-pubic roles - in *Her First Biscuits* (a winsome ten-year-old), *To Save Her Soul* (misdemeanor girl) and *The Foundling* (a teeny waif). She did *Pollyanna* too. And scarcely was she off American screens than there appeared a dimpled, huggable little mite called Shirley Temple (for years top of the popularity lists and trouncing Garbo and Dietrich). The mischievous rumour that the dimples were held in by suction pads within the little mouth was vigorously denied by the studio.

Anthony Hope, fighting his way out of a performance of *Peter Pan* where the audience had consisted, naturally, chiefly of noisy children, was heard to mutter 'Oh for an hour of Herod!' The shark in *Jaws* chose, you'll remember, as its second *bonne bouche*, a spoilt and irritating boy who had been annoying his exhausted mother ('Alex, Mom is pooped') on the beach (how delightful, incidentally, the shark looked in the film - a cross between a mini-submarine, off to sink the *Tirpitz*, and a friendly whale with no nutritional objective more elaborate than a *bouchée* of plankton). Married friends of mine, vexed by the frequent and uninvited visits to their bedroom by a young nephew who impertinently ferreted about in their 'things', concealed within them a loaded mousetrap and were soon rewarded by a

loud scream of pain as a pink finger-tip got itself pinched. Do please feel free to use this wheeze yourselves. As to brand of mousetrap, for lively work I can personally recommend either 'The Sentinel' or 'The Little Nipper' (adv.).

The Victorians, currently despised for their many imperfections, were no slouches when it came to bringing up children. For one thing, families were large and it was dangerous not to crush rebelliousness. And for another, it's clear that, unless they were angelic and preferably rather sickly little girls bound for an early grave, they didn't really like children much. Those who could afford it kept them under by banishing them to nurseries, virtually starving them and scaring the lives out of them by constant reminders of hell and eternal damnation. My mother, born in 1882, was given, as soon as she could read, a book called *The Star of Childhood*, compiled by a priest, and was forced every evening to go through an alarming series of questions ('Have I been obedient?' 'Was I naughty with nurse?' 'What wickednesses have I to confess?') and then had, trembling, to spout out suitable answers.

Earlier on there had been an improving yarn called *The Fairchild Family* by Mrs Sherwood who, in an autobiography, didn't think it all that odd that in childhood she had been daily strapped into a backboard to aid deportment, lived largely on plain bread and cold milk, and never sat on a chair in her mother's presence. We find a similar absence of *joie de vivre* in the lives of the Fairchild children, Henry, Lucy and Emily. Lucy is caught being envious of Emily's doll and has to pray fervently for forgiveness at her mother's knee. Then Henry is discovered stealing an apple ('Go from my sight, bad boy!') and is locked in an attic. Later Emily, not to be outdone in naughtiness, steals damsons from the store-cupboard, clumsily souses her knickers in damson juice, gets a frightful chill and hovers for days at death's door, with the family gathered round the bed and praying away like billy-o. And the result of all this tra-la-la? Admirably behaved children - obedient, respectful, thoughtful for others, accepting their lot and only speaking when spoken to. I just thought I'd mention it.

Roger Woddis

Mr Powell's Apocalypse

What is the wild man saying
Down at the Monday Club
That's got the old ladies praying
And putting them off their grub?

One hand to his taut abdomen,
One hand to his pallid cheek,
He thundered, 'Beware the Omen!'
(Retained for a second week).

Mouthing his Revelation,
His finger towards the East,
He called for repatriation
Of the terrible, turbanned Beast.

Hark to the wild man's warning:
'You have seen nothing yet.'
Lucifer, son of the morning,
Is placing an odds-on bet.

What is he engineering,
Driving the Devil's coach?
It's called in the trade careering
By making the white approach.

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Letters to the Editor

The Plutonium Economy

Sir, Norman Atkinson, in his plea for a plutonium economy (NS 1 October) advocates an international energy structure so feudal and imperialist that it is amazing a socialist could have entertained it for a moment. He seriously proposes that the developed nations with a nuclear capability, the so-called Secret Seven that he dubs more importantly 'the Nuclear Energy International', should rent out nuclear reactors and technicians to the developing countries. Nations like Britain would become nuclear landlords offering rent-a-reactor on good terms, with unlimited mileage. Of course the tenant nations would become nuclear serfs, entirely dependent upon the landlord for energy. Is that the kind of egalitarian society Labour is working for? Does Norman Atkinson not think that the leverage of nuclear landlords like the United States and the USSR would not be abused?

This preposterous notion is more diverting for its sheer irrelevance than for what it reveals about Mr Atkinson's feel for the future global order. Countless speakers at the United Nations Habitat Conference in Vancouver this summer stressed that what developing nations need for their 'clean water, decent diet and reasonable roof' is energy from relatively simple technology they can control themselves. The worst gift is the complex western technology that distorts the local economy and costs a bomb (which is not surprising, since that's what breeders can make.) In energy terms, the Third World needs solar collectors of better design, to make use of the abundant solar energy in many of the developing nations. Such collectors would be supplied by that great fast breeder-reactor in the sky (which is about as far away from us as a breeder should be). Solar collectors are far more valuable for developing nations since they match the dispersed nature of rural populations in the small towns and villages of the Third World.

The Royal Commission's authoritative report suggests that Britain should allocate more research funds to alternative energies, including solar power systems, but Mr Atkinson was so busily engaged in subtly smearing the Commission's membership that he omitted to mention this cardinal conclusion.

It seems that the real reason why the nuclear industry is clamouring for international sales of reactors and reprocessing plants is, as Walter Patterson pointed out (NS 27 August) because the domestic market is collapsing, in the US, Canada, and perhaps in Britain. And my own guess at why Norman Atkinson should be so interested in this export trade is that he believes that an enlarged nuclear programme will bring with it many more jobs. He sees the breeder breeding pay packets as well as plutonium, and is prepared to run the terrorist risk because of that. Yet many jobs would also be provided in Britain if we invested in developing the alternative energies - aerogenerators, wave power devices, combined heat-and-power systems, solar and geothermal energy collectors. And such jobs would not be created at the fearful price of the plutonium economy.

JEREMY BUGLER

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Sir, Mr Norman Atkinson displays a touching faith in his friends in nuclear engineering; one presumes that his long experience in the Labour movement has convinced him that university-trained experts can never be wrong. Now that they confess to him that they have

been designing inadequate safety systems to obtain nuclear power on the cheap, they regain their professional integrity by promising that they will make nuclear power really safe if only he gives them a blank cheque. Of course, given 'enough' money all sorts of things can be accomplished, even transplanting our excess population to the moon. But if Mr Atkinson were to talk to engineers responsible for safety and reliability rather than for sales, he would learn that safety cannot be so simply bought. Discipline, commitment and morals are more important than cash, and depend on more than the commercial context. The distinction between mercenaries and a liberation army is quite relevant to this problem.

To establish his point, Mr Atkinson should now provide us with sketches of the administrative schemes, and costings, for the kind of nuclear fuels security system he would like to see operating in say, Chile, Ethiopia, and Korea (North and South). As to the need to provide the whole world with power-consumption on a Western standard, Mr Atkinson might consult those new socialist movements that have other aspirations than 'catching up with America'.

JEROME R. RAVETZ

5 Moor Park Avenue
Leeds

Sir, I write as a practising professional electronic engineer (for what that's worth!) with a special interest in electronic amplifiers. These amplifiers are not sufficiently reliable to hang the future of humanity on, but they are a basic feature of any electronic control system which in turn is a basic feature of any nuclear power system. One of the fascinations of electronics is that things which no one has ever thought of tend to dominate designs. Indeed the famous incident when 'Detroit was almost lost' was caused by someone taking a candle to the circuit wiring.

Mr Atkinson is wrong: no engineer can ever design 'to the highest possible standards with absolute safety': such a thing is impossible both in principle and practice.

A. SANDMAN

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National Government Plea

Sir, The unparalleled sterling crisis must, in my humble opinion, reinforce arguments for the immediate formation of a National Government made up of the best that the various political parties can muster. The best because all leading parties have something of value to offer in terms of people; muster because the battle to get this country back on its feet will be long and hard.

On Tuesday last week the pound plummeted to the lowest level ever recorded against the dollar and other currencies; at \$1.63 it was down by 4.3 cents against the dollar, again a record, save at times of formal devaluation. Since a Labour Government returned to power in February 1974 it has dropped by some 27 per cent from \$2.26 to the present abysmally low and deeply worrying level.

It might seem incongruous for me to denigrate the present Government when at the same time I am advocating coalition but I make no apology. Despite the realism of the Prime Minister's rallying address to the Labour Party Conference last Tuesday it did absolutely nothing to stem the financial haemorrhage. And why? Because those who deal in sterling are only too well aware that *within Mr Cal-*

laghan's cabinet there are those who have no intention whatsoever of observing the spirit of his latest commendable exhortations. Public money is still being spent at an enormous rate, the nation is already up to its eyes in debt to creditors around the world, yet still these left-wing panjandrum trot out their grandiose schemes. Like children in a sweetshop they are mesmerised by the goods on display, heedless of the fact that they have not a penny piece in their pockets. Is it any wonder that those who would, under normal circumstances, back us to the hilt have now lost confidence?

What is called for now is a handpicked body of men and women, from every major political party, to govern the country for a term of two to three years. Basic qualities required include honesty, intelligence, courage, tenacity, the ability to present one's assets to the best advantage and the determination that the state of the nation will never again be allowed to approach such a low ebb. Such a body would command the support of the vast majority of moderate trade unionists, businessmen, bankers, financiers and, crucially important, overseas investors. Above all, it would command the respect of the good citizens of this country. The votes registered at the last General Election (Labour 39.6 per cent, Conservative 36.0 per cent, Liberal 18.4 per cent) should surely indicate that a National Government would be fair, acceptable and indeed essential.

The first priorities of a National Government would be fourfold:

(1) The decline of sterling must be halted and gradually restored to higher levels; this can only be achieved by restoring confidence in Great Britain.

(2) Simultaneously, the country's economy must be rationalised by curbing the reckless spending spree which has, for far too long, been bolstered by overseas borrowing.

(3) Those who advocate Marxist and similar destructive policies of nationalisation and ever-increasing state control must be made constantly aware of the folly of their ways at every opportunity. Industry must be allowed to get on with its job of producing the bulk of the nation's wealth without the constant threat of state takeover lingering over it like the sword of Damocles.

(4) Every bit as important as the rest, true democracy must be restored. A State where people are not afraid to walk the streets after dark, are not too frightened to attend a football match, or travel on public transport at night or opt out of union membership must be recreated.

Only by implementing these measures now - and they are not, after all, draconian - can we hope to restore this once great nation to its former levels of prosperity and freedom.

FRANK TAYLOR
Managing Director

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How the Rich Stay Rich

Sir, Peter Townsend's piece (NS 1 October) is the kind of prejudiced and unscientific polemic which has given 'social science' a bad name. 'More independent-minded economists' means, apparently, those with whom he agrees. Suggestions by the Inland Revenue Staff Federation (about as unbiased on these matters as Townsend himself) that such-and-such a tax abuse 'might' be the case become translated into assertions of undeniable fact. Difficult questions about the distribution of incomes and wealth are dismissed as 'illusions' without any attempt whatsoever to examine their basis in fact. The £5,000 tax-free that an executive may get if he has the misfortune to be sacked becomes, heaven help us, a 'fringe benefit'.

Townsend lists with enormous gusto the possible ways in which income statistics may understate high incomes: he includes the notional rental value of the owner-occupied house. However, he doesn't even mention the possible ways in which the official statistics may understate lower incomes, including the enormous difference between the real cost and the subsidised rental of council accommodation. Like is not compared with like, for the understandable reason that proper comparison would destroy Townsend's case. Thus, by far the most important and common fringe benefit for executives is not some disgraceful spendable tax dodge, but the pension contribution which allows people to retire on two-thirds of final salary, in a generous scheme: a provision which Townsend appears to think iniquitous, no doubt because of the inferior treatment of university professors (of whom, I believe, he is one).

Professors earn around £9,000 a year and can expect to retire on £4,500. If Townsend feels like protesting that a very few executives retire at levels five times as high or more, let him consider two points. First, tax reduces the 5:1 differential to 3:1 or so. Second, Townsend's own income must place him high among the number of the 10 per cent of people who enjoy something more than 23 per cent of total income. In the year from which his figures are drawn, the minimum income required to become a member of the 'rich' 10 per cent was the princely sum of £2,857 before tax. The top 1 per cent, by no means, incidentally, weighed in at a minimum £6,236. There are simply too few of us rich (in which I include myself as well as Townsend and me) to go around. A more sensible society, and a more sensible sociologist, would concentrate on creating more wealth instead of conducting a feeble intellectual pogrom against a class enemy who in Townsend's case turns out to be himself.

ROBERT HELLER
Editor

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Sir, May I suggest that Peter Townsend's article is just one more creaking effort to marry 19th-century political ideas to 20th-century realities. Trollope, writing 100 years ago, contrasted the well-to-do and wealthy with the 'second class gentleman with but £800 a year'. Conservative authorities put the value of the £ at about one-fifteenth of that of the pre-1914 £ (the value lessens daily). On that basis Trollope's £800 a year become a take-home pay of £12,000 a year, say a gross pay of £20,000 per year after allowing for 'perks'.

Viewed in the above manner, the Diamond Report convincingly demonstrates that the rich in the pre-1914 sense have ceased to exist – all that exists is a political myth with which orators (and journalists) can harangue the gullible masses. In a book review elsewhere in the same issue David Marquand makes the point that should redistribution of income be needed today in the interests of equality it is the 'affluent workers' who come under attack. Putting figures to the incomes of affluent workers, perhaps a take-home pay of £2,500 to £7,500 per year would cover the matter.

P. M. KALLA-BISHOP
4 Temple Fortune Court
London NW11

A Doctor's Closed Shop

Sir, I read with some interest the letters following the article by Paul Johnson ('Towards the Parasite State' NS 3 September). May I quote my experience of the closed shop in quite a different context? Recently I wrote a letter to a doctor (not my own but one in the same practice). The letter complained about

the way my daughter was kept waiting for two and a half hours in a surgery with an ailing infant of six months.

The response to this was the removal of my own name and that of my wife from the panel of our own doctor. Subsequently it transpired that we had been what I can only call 'black-ed' by all of the doctors in this partnership. My wife had been in the practice since a child, I for more than 25 years. This to me is the deliberate abuse of a power granted to the medical profession for quite a different purpose.

J. H. MULLICE

17 Camp Road
Bridgemaury, Gosport

Tu Quoque

Sir, Your profile of Alastair Burnet (NS 1 October) refers to his 'wounding journalistic lapse' in June 1970, when the 'Economist' in the week before polling day virtually conceded the election to the Labour Party. He was lapsing in good company; the soothsayers of Great Turnstile were reading the entrails in exactly the same way. 'At that moment, I became finally certain that the Tories have lost the election' (Mervyn Jones NS 19 June 1970). 'Why were we all so wrong?' (Alan Watkins, NS 26 June 1970). The confident tone of some political commentators six years later suggests that they are still rather short on humility, or at least caution.

A. D. PETTY

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Unfair to Memsahibs

Sir, James Cameron has not been the only reviewer of Pat Barr's *The Memsahibs* (NS 10 September) to abuse Kipling's Mrs Hauksbee, but he cannot even spell her name. This suggests it is high time he re-read his Plain Tales. There are some awful women to be found there but Mrs Hauksbee is not one of them.

There is in fact very little evidence in any of Kipling's Indian stories to support the view that he regarded Englishwomen in India as frivolities. On the contrary his entrancing portrait of *William the Conqueror* which he published perhaps significantly in *The Day's Work*, shows his view that the middle-class Englishwoman as well as Englishman had a substantially more serious role to play in India than at home.

SIMON GILLET

Republic of Nauru
Central Pacific

Gay Reply from the Pit

Sir, I really thought that the hoary old myth about coalmining communities displaying a particular hostility towards Gay Rights had been finally buried, but now we have Denis Skinner dredging it all up again at the *Tribune* Conference fringe meeting (Blackpool Diary, 1 October).

As I pointed out in a letter published in the NS as long ago as 25 February 1966, the North-Western Homosexual Law Reform Committee – now the Campaign for Homosexual Equality – was founded in, and initially conducted from, one of a large block of miners' cottages in Atherton, Lancs amid a fanfare of local publicity and a complete absence of public hostility of any kind.

It would be surprising if the intervening ten years of intense public debate and not a little new enlightenment has not improved the situation even further. Nevertheless, even if Skinner was proved right in his gloomy forebodings about his imagined referendums in darkest Bolsover, this would not excuse him from

supporting Gay Rights in the House, any more than his constituents' desire to restore capital punishment would justify him backing that particular regression into barbarism.

ALLAN HORSFALL

57 Bridgewater Street
Little Hulton
Worsley, Manchester

Darkest Provincialia

Sir, How interesting, I thought, as I read Caroline Seeborn writing her 'Mind Blower' piece (NS 24 September) to learn that 'women's breasts can be enlarged by hypnosis', and that 'if you are about to be raped' (presumably 'you' refers to women, though it doesn't say) you have a better chance of avoiding it (no consideration here of the oft-counselled 'lie back and enjoy it') if you make a fuss and/or attempt to run away. Most interesting, I thought. So, 'that evening' I went to my local, into the 'Lounge' where some of the community's 'best people' drop in, and I said, from above my whisky and ginger: 'Did you know that a woman's breasts can be enlarged by hypnosis?' Two women went pale, two others flushed right down to their un hypnotised breasts; four husbands told me all at the same time: 'You're a pervert', 'You're drunk', 'You're asking for a bunch o'fives', 'You'd better get out, quick'. And, walking home, I had two thoughts. One was: isn't it difficult to hold an intelligent, informed conversation? The other was: Why does Mary Whitehouse worry?

NOEL RATCLIFFE

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Literati at Play

Sir, Malcolm Bradbury's review last week of F. R. Leavis's latest book was a model of ineptitude, inaccuracy and insincerity. Suffice it to say that I dissociate myself from every word he wrote and take great exception to his misuse of the title, contents and intention of a paper which I wrote ('If you'll be Frank, – I'll be Karl'), and perform for money. It was merely a breach of etiquette that led him to travel the severe distance along the corridor from his office to my own without enquiring within as to whether I minded him mincing my words.

Trendy sociologists who receive such a caning from 'little Malcolm' in his astute *novellas* may take heart to know that there are equally superficial thinkers in the world of trendy litterateurs. Whatever my view of Leavis the Man, when it's backs-to-the-wall time I should be more secure armed with his critical and social sensitivity (or with that of Karl Marx) than with the thin stick of candy-floss that Professor Bradbury peddles as a substantial feast of insight.

JULIUS NUSSBAUM

School of English and American Studies
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Norwich



BOOKS IN GENERAL

Mervyn Jones

The Goddess That Failed

Inside India Today by DILIP HIRO Routledge
£6.95

India Today . . . oddly enough, the title of R. Palme Dutt's Marxist classic, published in the Thirties, which recorded in withering terms the sins of British imperialism but also had some sharp words for the Indian bourgeoisie, then flexing its muscles to take over from the Raj. India today, meaning 1976, is a country in which the Prime Minister wields dictatorial power, dissident public meetings are outlawed, and the press is censored. The number of Indians imprisoned without trial is probably close to 100,000 (the authorities refuse precise information) and Mr Hiro observes that this exceeds the number detained by the British at the time of the outbreak of civil disobedience, accompanied by acts of sabotage, in 1942. Amnesty International has made grave allegations, backed by smuggled letters, about torture in Indian prisons and police stations. Among those arrested after a period of clandestinity, and due to face a political trial, is George Fernandes, leader of the Socialist Party. When the Viceroy's still ruled, the cause of Indian freedom was the cause of the British Left, but you could hardly say that it arouses much concern now.

One understands the reluctance to think unpleasant thoughts about India, or to think about India at all when thinking about Chile is so much simpler. A hallowed belief, especially in Labour circles, is that India is a Good Country, endowed with its credentials by Clem Attlee, governed by enlightened pupils of Harold Laski, and struggling nobly to free the millions from poverty. Carrying the burden of this struggle is Mrs Gandhi, known to be the daughter of Nehru and believed by many to be the daughter-in-law of Mahatma Gandhi. Nehru and Nye Bevan were good friends; Mrs Gandhi and Jennie Lee are still good friends, and Jennie Lee vouches for the necessity of the dictatorship – sorry, the 'state of emergency'.

The great merit of Dilip Hiro's book is that it makes a ruthless examination of the social and political realities which have been the fundamental characteristics of independent India. He carried out his inquiries – 19 months of travel in every Indian state, plus a formidable amount of reading – and wrote the bulk of his book before the emergency was declared in June 1975. But he has added a long chapter about this 'constitutional coup', and clearly found no difficulty in linking it with the picture of India already formed by his observations. There was always, in Nehru's palmiest days, an arrogance of power; there was always bureaucracy, hierarchy and corruption; there was always the dominance of an alliance of

officials, capitalists and large farmers whose political vehicle was Congress. The purpose of the coup was, on the personal level, to extricate Mrs Gandhi from her difficulties with the law; on the political level, to make certain that India would continue as the kind of society it had been and exclude any alternative.

In short, the people who were on top before are on top now, with the difference that they cannot be openly criticised or removed by democratic process. If Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship is not the most evil in history – what yardstick does one apply? – it can fairly be called the most absurd for one simple reason. Other dictators were at least *new* – they could demand to be given a chance because of the failures of preceding governments. Mrs Gandhi, having been Prime Minister for nine years before her coup, was herself the preceding government and herself the failure.

In her career, failure has been the one consistent thread; yet if one reads this book attentively one sees that failure is the wrong word; given the political structure and hence her sources of support, she could not have seriously meant to do what she promised. At first, she was the puppet of the party bosses who had installed her in office as an agreeable figurehead. Considering her natural inclination to be the boss herself, she put up with this for a surprisingly long time. But when the regime became discredited and suffered dangerous electoral defeats, she rebelled against the bosses and threw them out. From 1971 onward she held all the trumps: immense popularity, a huge parliamentary majority after successes at the polls, the opportunity given by a mood of trust and hope. I was in India when she was routing her former controllers. Young progressives in the Congress ranks (some took the rhetoric too seriously and are now in jail) told me that all kinds of wonderful

things would happen – real land reform, a real onslaught on poverty, real social justice. Radicals warned me that nothing would happen. One doesn't like to be too cynical; I stressed the new possibilities as optimistically as I could. Nothing did happen.

Now, Mrs Gandhi can do anything she likes. So she could, in principle, since 1971. But with autocratic power as the operative force instead of any kind of popular movement, what can one expect? Probably some improvements in efficiency – the trains run on time, a supporter of Mrs Gandhi has told me seriously – and some drumhead justice for those among the practitioners of corruption who don't have the right connections. Anyone who expects more than that should read the closely reasoned analysis in Dilip Hiro's most important chapters: on social relationships in rural India, on the functioning of a brand of capitalism that combines the ruthless pursuit of profit with guaranteed state involvement, and the chapter entitled 'A Corrupt Society'.

Among the apologies for the dictatorship, the one I most dislike is the argument that freedom doesn't matter to the Indian masses because they only care about where the next meal is coming from. The fragment of truth in this is that the loss of freedom is most dramatically apparent to the minority of well-to-do urban Indians who were used to arguing at the tops of their voices in public places, organising meetings and debates, giving heterodox courses in universities, and writing articles in the English-language press, and who can now do none of these things. And it is a real loss, as it was a loss (let's say) in Greece under the colonels. But for the Indian masses, an improvement in the next meal can only come from an advance of true freedom, not a restriction. It's also the case that these masses, illiterate though they may be, have shown a remarkable awareness and shrewdness, notably in voting for candidates who care about them a bit. The possibility of doing this is what *they* have lost.

Inside India Today is heavy reading, for Mr Hiro is not blessed with a felicitous style. It is weighted down with far too many statistics – a surprising fault, since Mr Hiro is trenchant about the unreliability of Indian official statistics. It is a partisan book, indeed an indictment, and on certain points of history it is unfair. Also, it winds up with a prognosis – 'the Communist movement in

John Mander

Lenin in Zürich

His morning exercise: to tap the kerb,
Make sure that there is no one to his left,
Take two steps forward and one

back, perturb
No bourgeois crying, 'Property is theft',

But, dressed in grey, bow slightly
to Madame,

Devour *their* closing prices, chat

with Sunday
Painters painting what he calls with shame

Their lake, *their* sky, *their* Alps.
(Should they, too, one day

Change, become different in quality,
Because of this polite and balding exile?)
'This', he'll point out to Gorky on the quay,

'Is one of *their* finest churches; in the aisle
Their best late Gothic aumbry . . .'

'Volodya, we
Have work to do', says Maxim with a smile.

India has a promising future ahead' – which to my mind represents a triumph of Mr Hiro's sympathies over his judgment. For all this, it is a book of real value and considerable importance. I try to abstain from the kind of review that issues instructions to the reader, but I'm moved to make an exception. You should read this book and ponder on it. You should keep up with the

news about India that's hidden by the censorship by subscribing to *Swaraj* (from 12 Watermead Lane, Carshalton, Surrey) and if possible send a donation, because *Swaraj* is also illegally distributed in India. And if you are a socialist, or simply a democrat, you should consider whether you have a duty to George Fernandes and to the other 100,000.

John Carey

IF

The Alteration by KINGSLEY AMIS Cape £3.50

Buoyantly inventive from its ground-plan to its remotest pinnacles and twirly bits, Kingsley Amis's new novel has almost nothing expectable about it, except that it is a study of tyranny. It is set in 1776, but history has taken a different turn from the one that produced Mr Amis and us. The Reformation misfired, and Catholic piety retained its grip on the world. The great democratic and nationalist movements never materialised. Muscovy and Almaine still have their emperors, subject, like other earthly rulers, to the Pope. New England is a backwater, peopled by schismatics and common criminals. The United States, along with flying machines and *The Origin of Species*, exist only in the fantasies of Time Romance fiction. Thought and invention are stifled by a priestly army of spies and bureaucrats, and by the devout barbarities of the Holy Office, under Monsigs. Henricus and Laurentius (alias Himmler and Beria). Science is an indecent word, and electricity forbidden. Diesel transport, being independent of sparking plugs, has been allowed to develop, for the greater mobility of ecclesiastical officials: otherwise mankind depends on the horse. Society remains quasi-feudal, with the mass of the laity forming a passive herd, clad in moleskin or hessian, their minds so eroded by Christian teaching that they are quite unenvious of the luxuries their betters enjoy.

Four centuries of political stability have also stultified art. Since the French and Russian revolutions never happened, the Romantic and Modernist movements didn't either. Instead, the energies of genius have been wholly expended upon the polychrome grandeurs of Mother Church. The Cathedral Basilica of St George at Coverley (or Cowley), for instance, which occupies what

is, in our historical scheme, the British Leyland site, boasts tributes from English artists of every age, including frescoes of St Augustine by Blake and a rigorously traditionalist *Ecce Homo* by David Hockney. As a consequence of the papacy's artistic policy, most of the triumphs of the human spirit have been successfully avoided. Beethoven met an early death; the obscure Italian, remembered by the present Pope (an affable mass-murderer from Yorkshire) as 'Boonarotty or some such name', killed himself when his plans for St Peter's were rejected by the austere pontiff Germanian I (Martin Luther); Shakespeare was excommunicated, and his plays burnt. Presumably this last item means that the Bard put up a heartening show of resistance when confronted with oligarchy. If so, it distinguishes him from the real-life Shakespeare, who seems to have had no objection to flourishing under an oppressive regime.

One is seldom tempted, however, to pick holes in Mr Amis's historical thesis. To protest, for instance, that so brutal and truth-denying a tyranny as he portrays could not survive in modern times would be futile, for (as we are no doubt meant to reflect) the Soviet Union is at hand to prove the contrary. The case made out in *The Alteration* is, in a sense, a reply to G. K. Chesterton's 'If Don John of Austria had Married Mary Queen of Scots', which J. C. Squire printed in his *If It Had Happened Otherwise* (1931). There Chesterton depicted a 16th-century England, inspired by the romantic sway of two sovereign lovers, crusading joyously against Turk and Tartar, and joining the rest of Christendom on the rollicking highroad of Renaissance culture (even Shakespeare, Chesterton felt, would have benefited from the change, becoming gayer and less tormented in his tragedies). Beside this, Mr Amis seems sanity itself, and by showing what a horrible notion world government is, he usefully corrects the tendency to regard it as a panacea.

But *The Alteration* would be at best an educational game, instead of an outstanding novel, if Mr Amis had not given his ideas flesh and blood enough to compel our urgent concern. His masterstroke in this respect consists in selecting, as the material objects upon which the destructive powers of the whole pontifical hierarchy are focused, the testicles of a 10-year-old boy. For his hero Hubert Anvil, prize chorister at the Cowley Basilica, has a soprano voice of unexampled

quality, and to preserve this supreme gift of God into adulthood is, his spiritual superiors aver, a religious duty. All that is required is a safe and painless surgical operation – one to which, moreover, the medical profession is thoroughly accustomed, since it is the usual judicial procedure in cases of impurity. It is also carried out, in a more rough and ready spirit, by the functionaries of the Holy Office when they have a grudge against a suspect: the Anvil family confessor, who courageously opposes the boy's Alteration, is found bleeding to death, with various parts missing, after a visit from some Holy Officers. With so much castration about, the excitement, as Hubert plans to escape the knife, and become a runaway, is positively scrotum-tightening. Nor is the boy's predicament just an optional thrill-spinner, but integral to the book's design, since the emasculation of life and art is its major theme.

What impresses, apart from the cleverness of the whole set-up, is the delicate care with which Mr Amis conveys Hubert's bewilderment, and his childish bid to piece together, from the hints of older acquaintances, and from his own incipient feelings for husky-voiced Hilda van den Haag, the New England Ambassador's daughter, some estimate of what, if he submitted to God's will, he would be missing. The pain in other minds is also feelingly traced. Hubert's father, for instance, a stickler for duty, who is flattered by the attentions of priestly high-ups and consents to the operation, collapses in grief and guilt when, on a trip to Rome, he comes across some of the stars of the papal opera – shrill, obese male dowagers – and realizes what a walking obscenity he has agreed to his son becoming. A similar repulsion in the face of sexual ambivalence contributes to the sense of threat that radiates from the sinister celibates who wield power in *The Alteration's* world. The depiction of these pampered and devious creatures constantly brings the reader back to the unnaturalness of vesting all authority, as Catholicism does, in the barren, the thwarted and the unloved. True, the dastardliness of Mr Amis's clerics is sometimes a little overdone. But that merely enables *The Alteration* to accommodate some of the pleasures of the G. A. Henty-type adventure yarn, and so to maintain the standards of serious parody set by other recent Amis novels.

Among this week's contributors:

MERVYN JONES's new novel *Nobody's Fault* will be published next March by Quartet Books.

PHILIP FRENCH's revised and updated edition of *Westerns* will appear next spring from Secker & Warburg.

FLEUR ADCOCK's latest collection of poems, *The Scenic Route*, was published in 1974 by Oxford University Press.

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Anthony Howard

Guns and Butter

Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream
by DORIS KEARNS *Deutsch* £6.95

One of the innovations of the Johnson presidency was the importation into the Administration every year of bright young graduates just starting out on their careers. Known as 'White House Fellows', they would spend 12 months or more seeing how government worked from the inside as assistants to the President or one of his cabinet members. Doris Kearns, then a PhD student at Harvard, was one of the last (and luckiest) of the breed during the LBJ era – working directly for Johnson in the final nine months of his presidency and then spending weekends throughout the next four years helping him produce down at his ranch in Texas his own extremely turgid volume of memoirs. This, by contrast, rewardingly readable book represents the fruits of her own experience in being exposed – in rather special circumstances – to the oppressive weight of the LBJ personality.

Professor Kearns's own direct area of knowledge is, of course, limited. She never knew Johnson in his years of triumph – only when the shadows were already closing in; she saw most of him during his retirement when he seems to have become a prisoner of self-pity, if also a defiant hold-out against any form of political remorse. At the LBJ ranch on the Pedernales she became, according to her own account, a consoler and companion to the ex-President during the last four years of his life: he would, she tells us, come to her bedroom at about 5.30 a.m. in the morning (she would have risen and dressed by 5 a.m.) and while she sat in a chair by the window he would climb into her bed, pull the sheets up to his neck and talk. Lying in her bed he looked, she says, 'like a cold and frightened child': the impression he made upon her, she adds, was of someone 'crumpled, ragged and defenceless'.

Not that that in any way has inhibited Professor Kearns in writing her memoir. She clearly listened with patience (and, let us hope, with some sympathy) to Johnson's long, rambling essays in self-justification, his avowals and disavowals, his recriminations and repinings; once, however, he had left the room, it was plainly a case of 'scribble, scribble, scribble'. She presents herself to us as Johnson's principal confidante but it is a role in which one's ultimate feelings about her are bound to be ambivalent.

For, rather tiresomely, she is not just content with telling it as it was. Though not a psychiatrist, she possesses what she calls 'psychiatric knowledge' and uses it as the foundation on which to build 'a psychic structure' of Lyndon Johnson, which purports to explain his convoluted character in terms of the conflict between his parents and his desire to satisfy them both. Johnson's father, Sam Ealy Johnson, was a hard-drinking, loud-mouthed, energetic populist;

his mother, Rebekah Baines Johnson, was quiet, respectable, moralistic and, above all, possessive. The tension their double tug on his loyalty built into LBJ is offered as the clue not just to his character but to his dreams. Inevitably, Professor Kearns is soon lecturing us on Oedipus – a lecture cut short, though scarcely made any more convincing, by her eventual brisk comment: 'The Pedernales was not Thebes . . .'

Fortunately, however, her book is not just couch journalism – whether bedroom or consulting room. As a professor in the government department at Harvard and the wife of Johnson's own most successful speech-writer, Richard Goodwin, Professor Kearns sees politics as just as much part of her parish as LBJ's own personality. She is particularly good on Johnson's climb to power – the 13 years in the House of Representatives followed by the 12 years in the Senate: her own interest, she explains, lies in 'the interplay of personality and institutions in America' – and, especially in his Senate era, she could not have hoped to discover a more rewarding case-history than that of Lyndon Johnson. His record there, of course, was phenomenal and unprecedented: elected a 'freshman' senator in 1949, he had become the Democratic leader a bare four years later. And it all came about, as Professor Kearns vividly shows, because the needs of the Senate as an institution – 'brokerage', manipulation, even occasional subterfuge – exactly matched LBJ's own aptitudes. The presidency, as he only half came to realise even in his retirement, called for quite different gifts and qualities.

Yet even in Johnson's record as president there is a kind of 'continental divide' – the two years immediately after the Kennedy assassination in which he could do nothing wrong followed by the three years up to his withdrawal in 1968 in which he could get nothing right. Professor Kearns traces this geological fault in the Johnson record back to a decision he made in July 1965: it was then that he authorised the raising of the American troop level in Vietnam to 200,000 men (and, worse, did it in a typically Johnsonian Capitol Hill fashion). Rejecting the advice of the few who were privy to his plan, he resolutely refused to take the nation into his confidence and instead resolved, as it were, to declare war by sleight-of-hand.

Why did LBJ choose to go into Vietnam covertly? The most favourable explanation of his conduct is probably to be found in his fear that, if the extent of America's commitment had been realised, his Congressional critics would immediately have embarked on dismantling his policies for domestic reform, his 'Great Society' programme. He was so determined never to have the question 'Guns or Butter?' posed that he went on insisting, long after it was in any way warranted, that the American

people could have both. But in so doing he laid up for himself the maudlin, pathetic old age pictured here. Professor Kearns recalls his telling her one day in 1971:

It's a terrible thing for me to sit by and watch someone else starve my Great Society to death. She's getting thinner and thinner and uglier and uglier all the time; now her bones are beginning to stick out and her wrinkles are beginning to show. Soon she'll be so ugly that the American people will refuse to look at her; they'll stick her in a closet to hide her away and then she'll die. And when she dies, I'll die.

Lyndon Johnson, in fact, died on 22 January 1973 – within two days of Richard Nixon's second triumphal inauguration and 24 hours after news had been brought to him of a final effort to withdraw federal funding from what was left of the programmes intended to immortalise him as a great domestic reformer.

James Fenton

Sporting Life

The Way the Wind Blows by LORD HOME
Collins £4.95

The title and appearance of this autobiography, the warm colour photograph of the old boy with the fishing-rod, the way the sunlight glints on Lord Home's skull, are all very reassuring. You can relax. This is not a book to stretch the brain or disturb the normal equilibrium. Nations will rise and fall, wars will be fought, men and women will be traduced and shot, in some other account of this period; and in some other account it will appear that Lord Home had a certain role to play, and he will be assessed accordingly. But in the Dewey-decimal system this book should be classified under sport: shooting, cricket, fishing, and the sport of politics.

It has to be said that Lord Home's upbringing ('Eton, Munich and Suez – the typical Conservative education,' as somebody put it), while it gave him some grammar, was quite deficient in one respect. He has no idea about paragraphs. The platitudes stand naked and alone, whereas they could so easily have been concealed among the unremarkable recollections. Here is one paragraph:

The Commonwealth was proving to me every day that politics is essentially about people.

And here another:

Education too – and this is basic to the development of democracy – is available to a far greater number and in much wider variety, and that too is good.

Sometimes the paragraphs have final sentences that bring you up with a jolt:

With two of my Christ Church friends, I formed a select club, which had but two rules – the first that whenever we met thereafter we should drink the best claret available; the second that we should destroy any aspidistra on sight – and evidence had to be produced

to prove it . . . I used to receive snippets of aspidistra leaves from far and wide, and myself contributed many – not without adventure. Oxford had also helped us to get our values right.

And sometimes it is the transition from one paragraph to the next which produces the shock. In the following passage Lord Home is describing Sir Edgar Whitehead, the Premier of Southern Rhodesia:

He was in many ways a man of singular capacity. He once arrived to talk with me at Dorneywood, and between 8 p.m. and midnight consumed 13 bottles of beer. When, before driving back to London, I had asked him if he would like to retire, his reply was 'Certainly not'.

It was in this exceptionally unfavourable climate for statesmanship that the British government had to act.

Finally, Lord Home tends to open a new paragraph when he is skating over some issue about which he does not want to tell us anything. Thus, in describing the battle for succession to his leadership of the Tory party, he tells us that there were two men at least – Heath and Maudling – who were well qualified to lead. The next paragraph begins: 'When Ted Heath was elected . . .'

Such elisions are too frequent for this book to contain much of interest, even though Lord Home's life was full of interest. The account of Munich is remarkable only for a brief description of Hitler walking down a passage: 'I noticed that his arms hung low, and that they swung not alternately but in unison.' Suez is over almost before it has begun. The author becomes Prime Minister with decorous, reluctant ease. Defeated in 1964, he tells us very little of his personal feelings on leaving No 10 by the back door:

The Prime Minister kindly put Chequers at our disposal for a day or two, and then Sir Hugh Wontner, with great consideration, allowed us to stay in the Penthouse at Claridges for a fortnight, so that a sense of perspective and poise was gradually regained.

This is a superficial book and it is bound to sell well. If you buy it and post it now, it should get to your relatives in Rhodesia just in time for Christmas.

Fleur Adcock

At the Creative Writing Course

Slightly frightened of the bullocks as we walk into their mud towards them she arms herself by naming them for me: 'Friesian, Aberdeen, Devon,

South Devon . . .'

A mixed herd. I was nervous too, but no longer. 'Devon,

Friesian, Aberdeen . . .'

the light young voice chants at them faster as the long heavy heads lift and lurch towards us. And pause, turn away to let us pass. I am learning to show confidence before large cattle. She is learning to be a poet.

Philip French

Star Struck

The Day the Laughter Stopped: The True Story Behind the Fatty Arbuckle Scandal by DAVID A. YALLOP *Hodder & Stoughton* £5.95

Goldwyn: The Man Behind the Myth by ARTHUR MARX *Bodley Head* £4.95

William Dean Howells once cheered up Edith Wharton after the failure of a Broadway play by assuring her that 'what the American public always wants is a tragedy with a happy ending'. Of course what they usually get in real life are comedies with pathetic endings. This is especially true of those who laboured in the dream factory of Hollywood giving the public what it was deemed to want. The fulfilled life, the satisfactorily rounded career, these are hard to come by in Hollywood, and there is something as sad about Samuel Goldwyn, who died in 1974 at the age of 93 worth \$2,000m., as there is about someone apparently at the other end of the professional success/failure spectrum like Roscoe Arbuckle, who died in 1933 at the age of 46, broke and virtually forgotten.

In 1921, 'Fatty' Arbuckle was at the height of his fame, next to Chaplin the most popular and handsomely rewarded comedian in the world. Then suddenly he fell from grace. At a Labour Day party in Arbuckle's San Francisco hotel suite, an actress called Virginia Rappe was taken ill, and died five days later; and on the testimony of a woman who had accompanied her to the party (and was probably involved in some blackmail plot) Arbuckle was arrested and charged with rape and murder. Miss Rappe was suffering from a venereal infection, had had several abortions, was almost certainly pregnant, and had died of peritonitis. The comedian had never met her before and inasmuch as he had touched her at all it was in comforting her when she was taken ill. The evidence was unbelievably flimsy, and eventually after highly prejudicial pre-trial hearings, he appeared before three juries charged with manslaughter. The first two were hung, the third acquitted him after five minutes out. Had there been any culpability on his part it is doubtful whether he would have got off. The prosecution team had staked their political futures on putting Arbuckle in jail (or preferably in the gas chamber); the press with the Hearst chain in the lead (and the *New York Times* not far behind) had already convicted him; the moral vigilantes of America, having secured Prohibition, had switched their attentions to Hollywood, its denizens and their racy products, and were bent on making an example of the portly comedian. His acquittal, however, left him deeply in debt, largely unforgiven, branded as an orgiast; through a ban imposed by the newly created Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association of America, he was not allowed to

appear on the screen. He was thus a victim of public opinion and of an industrial monopoly. 'Within a year or so he died', remarks Chaplin casually in *My Autobiography*, which is not quite true: Arbuckle lived another 11 years, long enough to marry twice, take to drink, and pay off his debts through public appearances, pseudonymous directing assignments, and finally acting in a series of two-reelers that pre-figured a possible comeback.

David Yallop has dug up much valuable new information and is the first writer to draw extensively on the records of the trials, which he enthrallingly reconstructs. However, like certain Dreyfusards, he is too keen upon the total vindication of his hero to create a convincing portrait. Arbuckle emerges as a gentle, almost saintly person, possibly 'the most chaste man in Hollywood'. The villains, apart from the ambitious lawyers, the church, the press, the self-appointed guardians of public morality and the fickle public, are the shifty moguls who made a scapegoat of the innocent Fatty to protect their investment. But Yallop attaches too much importance to this single case in the history of Hollywood (after all, effective enforcement of the Production Code of industrial self-censorship didn't come until 1934), and moreover his righteous indignation precludes him from making that dispassionate analysis of causation and motive that another rehearsal of the Arbuckle scandal demands.

While Arbuckle was being slowly roasted in San Francisco, Samuel Goldwyn was between jobs in Long Island, dictating *Behind the Screen*, the first autobiography to be written by (or ghosted for) a Hollywood mogul. As a creator of the MPPDA, Goldwyn had acceded in the sacrifice of Fatty, and he didn't do much that year to help his onetime inamorata and contract star (and Fatty's leading lady at Keystone), Mabel Normand, when she too became a pariah after being a suspect in the sordid

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scandal surrounding the murder of director William Desmond Taylor. As Yallop reads the evidence, it was Goldwyn's former partners Adolph Zukor and Jesse Lasky who persuaded the MPPDA president Will Hays to ban Arbuckle from the screen.

In that year, 1922, Goldwyn was at a crucial stage in his career. Like most of his fellow moguls, he was a poor Jewish immigrant from Eastern Europe who had served his commercial apprenticeship in the garment industry before breaking into 'the show business'. In 1913 with his brother-in-law Lasky and Cecil B. DeMille he had formed the production company that merged with Zukor's studio to become Paramount; with the Selwyn Brothers he had created the Goldwyn Company from which he took his own name, having combined his anglicised Polish surname 'Goldfish' with theirs (the other possibility, 'The Selfish Company', having been rejected). His supreme egotism had caused him to be driven out of each company – in both cases richer in experience, confidence and capital. From 1922 onwards he would operate independently with an autocracy unmatched by Mayer, Cohn, the Warners and other studio bosses who had partners, boards of directors and shareholders to answer to. Where most of his contemporaries were forced out of the companies they created, Goldwyn remained in charge until the onset of a bitter senility, and lived long enough to hate the industry he had helped build and to be ignored by his successors. He created no tradition; the so-called 'Goldwyn Touch', that allegedly individual quality he gave his pictures, died with him. While very few of his 80-odd personally supervised productions are contemptible, only a handful (mostly the silent pictures and early talkies) have worn especially well. He had considerable production flair, a feeling for packaging, but nearly all his films were based on successful books and hit plays, and his role as an innovator is a minor one.

He is nevertheless a major figure in the history of Hollywood and deserves to be remembered for more than his Goldwynisms (e.g., 'include me out', 'a hospital is no place to be sick', 'a blanket cheque', 'in two words, im possible', 'biting the hand that lays the golden egg'), that he either uttered or had attributed to him by friends, enemies or his own press department. Groucho's son, Arthur Marx, has assembled the largest collection of them ever made, along with hundreds of Goldwyn anecdotes, many of them very funny, some of them frightening examples of his ruthlessness and brutal insensitivity. The result is entertaining, but overlong, unreliable and superficial. Marx never takes us much beyond a particularly striking judgment that he quotes from Goldwyn's friend Howard Dietz, the longtime MGM publicity director who devised the Company's roaring lion trade mark some 60 years ago and wrote the lyrics for *That's Entertainment*:

He liked himself and anything to do with the name Goldwyn. But I don't think he knew anything about making movies. He was an interesting man though – but how he could arrive at the pinnacle of success with so little was beyond me. I like him though . . . a lot better than Louis B. Mayer. Mayer was evil. Sam was just demanding.

Derek Mahon

Salad Days

Crowned Heads by THOMAS TRYON *Hodder & Stoughton* £4.95

The American Rivals of Sherlock Holmes edited by Hugh Greene *Bodley Head* £4.50

Trinity by LEON URIS *Deutsch* £4.95

The crowned heads of Thomas Tryon's title are those of 'America's royalty; crowned in the court of Hollywood' – the big stars of a bygone era. The book consists of four long short stories, each an imaginary portrait of one of these royals, with a certain amount of interlocking taking place. There is Fedora, 'the legendary, ageless actress who shuns publicity, surrounded by myths, her past shrouded in mystery', clearly modelled on Garbo; Lorna Doone, 'a failed B-movie actress, living off commercials, hugging to herself memories of a past that never came, unable to face the future'; Bobbit, 'the child prodigy, the super-star who eclipsed Rooney and Garland, who has never grown up'; and Willie Marsh, king of them all, ageing gracefully in his Hollywood mansion.

Each story moves towards disenchantment or worse. Fedora, the miraculously youthful octogenarian, a contemporary of Harlow but looking half her age, is almost literally unmasked: she's been living in retirement for years while her previously unsuspected illegitimate daughter stood in for her. (There is nothing so reassuring as a mask,' she says, quoting Colette – a line that might have stood as epigraph to the whole book.) Lorna, on vacation in Mexico, fails to find the peace she is looking for, and dies clutching a serpent to her bosom. And Willie suffers literal crucifixion, at the hands of a Charles Manson-type gang of crazies, in his own private chapel.

Tryon writes extremely well about women, perhaps because he shares some traditionally feminine preoccupations – with bodily self-care, with brand names. A scarf is always Hermès, a bag Gucci, mints Tic Tac. There is a certain limp-wristed quality present, too, which distinguishes his work from that of more robust writers about Hollywood like Fitzgerald and Nathanael West: a sign of the times perhaps. He gets most of his details right (the 'pale soles' of a beach-boy's feet, the *chapeaux clagues* 'which snapped into a top hat with a flick of the open palm', as worn by the old Hollywood elite), and some wrong (Patmos is nowhere near Crete, and hasn't an airport); but he is consistently entertaining, and knows how to put the frighteners on the reader. There is mention here and there of a special vinaigrette dressing, my dear, invented by Noël Coward and passed on to Willie Marsh. ('The trick was a couple of pinches of sugar and dry mustard', which I always thought was something invented by my wife and passed on to me, but never mind.) In the course of Willie's crucifixion, one of the crazies gives him a drink of vinaigrette dressing. And his autobiography was to be called *Salad Days*.

The American Rivals of Sherlock Holmes is a sequel to Hugh Greene's other *Rivals of Sherlock Holmes* books, and collects 13 detective stories of the Holmes period by American authors. In his introduction he quotes Howard Haycraft's pronouncement in his history of the detective story, *Murder for Pleasure*:

It cannot be pretended that the American detective story revealed anything like the quantity or the level of quality of its English counterpart in the years up to the first world conflagration.

– although we might now add that after that conflagration, while English crime fiction narrowed its focus to what Auden called 'the guilty vicarage' (Christie *et al*), America began to produce Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. There are already indications in this anthology. A murderess in the opening lines of Hugh C. Weir's 'Cinderella's Slipper'

might have been going to his wedding instead of to his death. Spick and span in a new spring suit, he paused outside the broad, arched gates of the Duffield estate and drew his silver cigarette case from his pocket.

Not a far cry from the sort of opening later patented by Chandler, although Chandler would have told us more about that spring suit. There is also a cisatlantic quality about the reason for the murder (big-business corruption – a recurrent theme), and about the bone of contention – a 'phonographic record' of a secret directors' meeting. Also, the detective is a lady, and the narrator a lady journalist. But Weir disappoints us by making the butler do it.

Rodriguez Ottolengi, in *The Montezuma Emerald*, depreciates his own evidently Latin origin by making his villain a stage Mexican. An Anglophile, Ottolengi has a kind word to say about English domestic servants, whose 'deferential politeness of manner', it seems, contrasted sharply with that of native-born lackeys. *The Montezuma Emerald* is barely distinguishable, in fact, from an English detective story of the period, except that all the action takes place (as in most of these stories) within commuting distance of downtown Manhattan, which is transformed for the purpose into an American version of St James's. People 'impart' things to 'that faithful servant'; and there is at least one occasion on which the detective 'fervently ejaculates'.

Leon Uris, the author of *Exodus*, has made a grave mistake in trying to write an Irish historical novel – 751 pages, no less. As if to dispel the metaphysical mists of Irish history, or in frantic pursuit of verisimilitude, he offers us maps, facts, explanations. No use, I'm afraid. It must be said that his researches, no less than his intentions, have been Herculean; but the result is so desperately trite, and so very long, and so obviously aimed at a middle-brow market, that it is best set tactfully to one side, with both hands. Everything is here, and nothing – the native Irish, the landed gentry, the Protestant shipyard workers of Belfast, 'Danny Boy' and 'O God Our Help in Ages Past'; but not a hint of understanding. The highest wisdom we are afforded – and it comes after 747 pages – is that 'We are all absurd actors on the stage of the diabolical'. Get away.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Amphitheatre of War

Tamburlaine the Great *Olivier*
Carte Blanche *Phoenix*
The Comedy of Errors *Stratford*

Well, now we have it, or most of it. The electric gadgetry may not be A-OK, and the great drum that constitutes the stage has yet to rise and fall as briskly as it should; but the circular surface is at least there, the base of an intimate and attractive amphitheatre. It is easy to see everything and everyone without having to knot your neck and aim your eyes round the haircut in front. And if the company was presenting a play in which a pin, as opposed to cannonballs, military boots and kingdoms, had to fall, we could surely hear the sound without effort. I see no reason to revise the opinion I tentatively offered last spring, that the Olivier is the most exciting auditorium in the country; and I only wish I wasn't equally confident of the conclusion I reached some 10 or 15 years ago, at dawn on the day my essay was due, that *Tamburlaine* is as monotonous a play as one is likely to find tucked away in the dustier archives of the British theatre. There is, admittedly, a sort of grandeur in that iambic surge, billowing down and over you with unerring regularity – but who wants to spend four-odd hours feeling like a battered mussel?

A tragic hero, by tradition, is a man of some nobility who squares up to powers greater than himself; but it is difficult for anyone brought up in the shadow of two world wars to accord Marlowe's human howitzer that status. Tamburlaine's 'greatness' consists only in conquest and carnage and the burning of books. As battle follows battle (and battle does so with relentless persistence) the number of his victims grows to include whole cities of men, women and children, not to mention his own son, slaughtered for failing to meet his quota of brutality. The only power greater than this 'scourge of God', as he likes to be called, turns out to be the grim reaper himself, who comes in the guise of a belly-ache to carry him off in the last reel. Altogether, he is a very monotonous protagonist, which is why Albert Finney, with his oversized and somewhat unvarying charisma, might seem ideally cast in the part. But in fact the performance is more discriminating and intelligent than one had feared, especially in the first half, when Finney is at pains to emphasise the narcissism, the lolling, mocking, sweet-talking self-assurance he sees in the character. With his golden curls and beard, he looks rather like Apollo, and acts like him too, swaggering blithely round the stage as if he expected his helmet to sprout wings. There were also times when I was more fancifully reminded of the younger Mohammed Ali, sprawling back and crying, 'I am so pretty!'

The trouble is that this glistening-eyed Ali or Apollo has to dwindle into grizzled Mars, and discovers nothing as interesting as pity, self-doubt or conscience on the way. Even his love for Zenocrate is a loud, rhetorical business, and quite fails to humanise him. Late Tamburlaine is only a more dedicatedly ruthless version of early Tamburlaine, and there is little Finney can do with him except modulate the crashing verse as nicely as he can. Still, at least we're allowed to see the character as he is. Peter Hall's production is cool, detached, at times surprisingly humorous, and attempts neither to romanticise nor condemn Marlowe's sneak preview of this century's antichrists. It is also very economical, limiting battles to a red glow and exploding percussion, scenery to the standing, swirling or bloodily expiring bodies of the players themselves. There are, as it turns out, some capable people inside those Arabian-nights pajamas and dressing gowns – Barbara Jefford, Robert Eddison, Nicholas Selby, Diana Quick as an early version of the Portia of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Brian Cox a lumbering warlord, Philip Locke as the namby-pamby king of Persia, Michael Gough as a dry-stick sultan, Susan Fleetwood a rapturous Zenocrate, and Denis Quilley a fruity, ebullient emperor, arrogant in power and splendidly sullen when Tamburlaine amicably decides to use him for a footstool. The performances are good, and it is all very epic and impressive; but I sometimes wished that Peter Hall had chosen to baptise his new theatre with something less overwhelming than the Pacific Ocean.

'Yawn, yawn, yawn,' muttered the man behind me as he listened to what was, in fact, one of the better *Carte Blanche* sketches, about the happenings in the underwear department of a store whose assistants were more than usually attentive to their customers. A moment later, he scuttled despondently out, a skinny, spidery figure in (really) a not-very clean mac. It was clear that Kenneth Tynan's compilation was too literary for the professional voyeurs, those who knew they had only to go to the Charing Cross Road to find blunter stuff behind counters, or even on open sale in shop windows. But, if they reject it for its mildness, who is left to approve? The same people who have been coming in charabancs from local WIs and pigeon fanciers' clubs to keep *Oh Calcutta!* in business for the past six years? I suspect they'll think the sequel a bit too explicit about pegs and holes and rather too indiscriminate about the ways of connecting them. Urban sophisticates like you, me and the editor of *The Times*? Not if one was to judge by the interval smalltalk. My brother critic from the *Spectator* looked as if someone had been treating his beard with

weed-killer, and the word that rippled to and fro across the pink gins echoed the man in the mac: 'Boring, boring, boring.'

Of course, 'boring' is a reaction traditionally synonymous with 'shocking'; and critics, of all people, aren't going to proclaim it to the world when they get something as unguarded as the hots. All the same, I don't think my friends' hostility was disingenuous. An apologia for a flasher should be much wittier, as should a faux-naïf vindication of cunnilingus; an extract from Rochester's hitherto unperformed *Sodom* confirmed that the cast has been picked for reasons other than the limpid speaking of 17th-century verse; and an item involving Tristan, Isolde, a ladder and a bed proves even more incomprehensible. As much to the point, several of the writers invited by Tynan to dramatise their erotic fantasies have evidently been hoarding some ugly and off-putting lumber in their mental coal-cellars. A geriatric gang-bang, with oldsters shrieking 'mind my colostomy bag', suggests a particularly sour attitude to the subject it's supposed to be celebrating. A sketch in which two upper-crust twits feverishly copulate beneath the tea table isn't much more friendly. Indeed, the most distinguished contribution of all, by Ionesco, shows a tattered crone pranking herself into a gilded courtesan while a gilded courtesan declines into a tattered crone, a puritan demonstration of the superficiality and transitoriness of beauty. To be sure, there are more gleeful items, both verbal and balletic, dressed and undressed; but the show as a whole leaves you with the feeling that sex is as much to be mistrusted as enjoyed.

Clifford Williams, who directs this trumpet strumpetry, might have been better employed at Stratford, giving us the nth revival of his commedia dell'arte version of Shakespeare's *Errors*. But perhaps it is time for a change, and Trevor Nunn's production is certainly that. 'She's a kitchen wench and all grease,' cries Dromio of Syracuse at one point, a line emended with some licence. Mr Nunn's kitchen wenches are all Greece. So is the stage, a happy-go-lucky blend of taverna and Athenian souvenir-shop. So is Solinus, an overblown Papadopoulos with medals and dark glasses, blaring death-threats through loudspeakers. So is everything else, down to the ices, ouzo and pavement cinema-show. The result, with songs added by Nunn himself, is a bit frantic, rather too determined to make the very most of its parasols, intercoms, traffic cops, perambulating priests and whatever other opportunities for comic business happen to be on hand; but it is often fetchingly inventive and funny, and I can't feel too outraged by the obvious disrespect, when Shakespeare's most bouncing and immature comedy is the victim. Judi Dench is slightly awkward and out-of-tune as Adriana, perhaps because she is aiming for a depth of feeling the production can't and won't countenance; but there's something marvellously extrovert and stylish about most of the rest, and notably Mike Gwilym's Antipholus of Syracuse, a slouching playboy, Nickolas Grace's frisky, gormless Dromio of Ephesus, and Robin Ellis's Doctor Pinch, as rackety a conjuror as can ever have played in run-down Peloponnesian café or third-rate seaside pier.

Art

John Spurling

Pepys-Show

Art in 17th Century Holland National Gallery

The exhibition of 17th-century Dutch art makes one feel a bit unsteady. Not that there is too much to see or that it is not laid out clearly, divided into seascapes, landscapes, interiors, followers of Caravaggio, portraits, still lives, etc., with furniture, ceramics, a little sculpture and objects of glass and silver to vary the focus; but that it sets out to be the mirror to a complex culture, and the mirror for us is double. We look at the art with which those distant people surrounded themselves and we form some idea of their taste, but then, because their taste was to record themselves in minute detail – a nation, as it were, of Pepyses – we find ourselves looking at their lives in the mirror of their art and so again, but with a new perspective, at their art in the mirror of their lives.

One might begin with simple admiration for the skill that could metamorphose a silver dish into a pool of running water in which a dolphin is playing, or show every last movement, gesture, expression, object, surface, texture, characteristic of a room and its occupants, even though there are some fifty of them and most are drunk. One might then feel alienated by the tightness and rightness of it all, the self-satisfied virtue of Steen's Burgher of Delft, seated nonchalantly on his front step in a natty black suiting and giving ear with his handsome head on one side to the petition of a passing beggarwoman; the neat towns, the swept and garnished rooms, the plain churches, the docile countryside, the healthy outdoor activities on ice-bound rivers.

Or, if one brushed aside their Puritan complacency, it might be to revolt at the ostentation not only of their tables, as reflected in the well-named *pronkstilleven* (lavish still lives) of such as Willem Kalf, he of the scarlet lobster, the elaborately mounted drinking-horn and extravagant glasses (whose originals or similars are displayed in a case nearby), but of hanging such brazen advertisements of their affluence on the walls for good measure.

They also hung on their walls, of course, the evidence of other people's less satisfactory lives – a merry company drinking in a brothel, whose loose gestures and fleshly leers might be enjoyed for what they taught at the same time as what they lacked of morality, a historical scene by Rembrandt in which a Dostoevskian Judas crouches beside his scattered pieces of silver or another by Jan de Bray of Cleopatra looking provocatively into Antony's eyes while unhitching the priceless pearl earring which she is about to dissolve in vinegar and eat. Here we go back through the mirror again, for this last piece hardly looks historical at all and turns out not to be. The artist

has depicted his own father and mother as Antony and Cleopatra, himself and his brothers and sisters as their attendants. What it was intended to signify for the man on whose wall it hung was not presumably what it signified for the painter.

One becomes aware of a hiatus in the reverberating perspectives. The world whose faithfully reflected appearances they were only too eager to pay their painters for was not only their reality, but their desired reality. Their new-found political and religious freedom, their material prosperity and their artistic expression of satisfaction in these blessings are all of a piece. If Steen's burgher is at the centre of their sense of themselves and their good fortune, then Hendrick Vroom's extraordinary *Pursuit of the Armada in a Storm* (in which a massive galleon, the ultimate in sophisticated weaponry, wallows helplessly in the grip of a wicked black-green sea, while in the trough of a wave a monster opens its jaws and rolls its eye) defines its circumstance, the destructive power of other men and the still greater power of Nature. The hiatus occurs when we, the beady-eyed tourists from an alien world whose centre and circumference are still recognisable in theirs, find ourselves in collusion with those few among the artists who reflected more than was asked of them.

We may, for instance, easily sympathise with Pieter de Hooch's housewife and her maid as they take panicky action in the courtyard while Himself in black with a tall hat is to be seen approaching briskly down the path towards his dinner which is not yet even in the pot, but the absolute reality of the setting, the costumes, the utensils, the precise limits set to the drama, all exclude our participation. We remain an unseen eye at the keyhole as much as when looking into van Hoogstraten's boxed peep-show a couple of rooms further on.

But Cuyp's landscapes, of which there are several magnificent examples in this exhibition, are another matter. Here are the well-tailored figures, the neatly-stepping horses, the clean cows, the trim towns, the boats riding on glassy rivers, all the customary props; they are shown, however, firstly in the broad, sky-dominated proportions of cinemascope and secondly in an other-worldly light. Cuyp's sun is placed low on the horizon to left or right; it turns his clouds to a luminous grey tinged with yellow, pink or orange, his stretches of water to opaque white, his figures and objects to semi-silhouettes, his distances to soft floating curves. The result is to transform this sober workaday Dutch republic of good government and orderly pursuits, at which we can only peep, into an artist's dream of Eden which we must either share or reject as unreal. Cuyp himself, incidentally, married well and became a prosperous member of the establishment in Dordrecht. His heady vision caught the imagination of English collectors between 1760 and 1840, hence our country's fortunate possession of so many of his paintings.

The 13 Rembrandts on display all stay more or less within the pale marked out by his contemporaries, with the exception of the National Gallery's latest acquisition, the newly cleaned and restored portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels. Wearing an

amber necklace and a large white fur wrap, but apparently nothing else, she sits in a relaxed position with one hand inside the wrap, the other on the ornamental knob of her chair-arm, and contemplates the spectator. She is the sole person from within this mirrored world with whom one feels completely at home, as if for her too all that pressing materiality were already confined to its framed reflections. Yet she is nothing if not material herself and she seems to have been sufficiently at home in her own world to cope with Rembrandt's bankruptcy. She and his son formed a company to employ him and so preserve his earnings from his creditors.

Television

John Sturrock

Blue Moon

The Tories made another of their ill-advised bids to be thought of as the party of realism in Monday's *Panorama* (BBC-1), when a less than compelling sample of agents, parliamentary candidates and MPs met to reassure one another that their cause still lives. The brave new watchword is to be that the facts of life are Tory, which must mean, if anything at all, that it is not really Mrs Thatcher you hear asking for your support in these troubled times but the voice of God, or History, or maybe just the Market speaking through her. One can understand that she should want to go above the heads of the electorate like this because the Tories started their Brighton conference with the economy in a shambles yet with a lead in the opinion polls of a humiliating $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Urged to say what was wrong with their party, the faithful preferred to say who was wrong: and blamed the whole thing on the shadow cabinet, faceless wonders for the most part. But if the elders are to be dropped, who will replace them? One backwoodsman present will have scuttled many a floating vote with his bizarre vision of Dr Rhodes Boyson as Foreign Secretary in the stead of 'that kindly, sweet old man' (*sic*) Reginald Maudling. After which nothing, neither the pepful vacuities of the Chairman, Lord Thorneycroft, nor the steely macro-economics of Sir Keith Joseph, could again make the Conservative *politik* seem quite real.

No signs of salvation from *Panorama* then; what about *The Money Programme* (BBC-2, Friday)? The title, 'The City and the State', was pure Hegel, but the dialectic was tame and the only Hegelian abstraction on show was Sir Fred Catherwood, that well-known synthesis of God and Mammon who is sure to get his say on occasions such as this. The format was of a quasi-judicial inquiry into the pressing, post-Slater question of whether the City of London does a good job for the country, or only for the City of London: whether, that is, the invisible earnings we hear so much about even if we can't see them make up for the

City's failure to invest its funds in British industry. Four men of finance, including Sir Fred, were questioned by Sir Alec Cairncross, an Oxford economist, and Frank Chapple of the ETU, who made the mistake of trying to sound as much the economist as his partner, when he could have been asking the blunter, less technical questions we non-economists would like to put to bankers and financiers. As it was, the City never even tottered. The man from the Midland Bank alone seemed rattled when he learnt that his bank's affairs were conducted, in its own words, primarily 'in the interests of its owners', i.e., its shareholders. A pity this couldn't have been pursued, at a time when the City is trying to frighten us into supposing that, come the nationalisation of banks and insurance companies, all our hard-earned bread will be fed to the lame ducks of industry. But it is investors who worry about what banks do with their money, not depositors; were the clearing banks no longer to have any share-holders their customers might get a better deal.

The Lively Arts (BBC-2, Sunday) had Melvyn Bragg conversing at some length and in what looked like some luxury with Tennessee Williams about his life and his plays, two sides of him which came, as they generally do, to seem like one, with the plays themselves as so many chapters of autobiography. Bragg got on well with the chuckling, unexpectedly soigné playwright, and kept him talking productively. Williams explained the heavy sensuality of his published work by the repressions inflicted on him by his hugely maladjusted family. Writing was his escape from the shyness which kept him tongue-tied and blushing into his twenties. Like other shy persons before him, he has now written some notably 'frank' memoirs, and under Bragg's proddings he was duly frank for us too, about the development of his homosexuality and his first, delayed sexual experiences, with a girl (when he was 27) and then with a man (at 28). With the straight talking there went prurient camerawork: as the revelations promised so the camera closed in on the talking face, inviting us to share whatever evidence there might be of strain or guilt on those disarmingly languid features. There was none, Williams remained possessed and skittish to the end, and more given to anecdotes than to profundities about his craft or his beliefs. A sympathetic man, surely, not least for his barbed asides about his predatory mother, still alive at 91 ('if you can call that alive').

In *Softly Softly Task Force* (BBC-1 Wednesday) Elwyn Jones's script took this weekly event into new areas (an abysmal turn of phrase for which I give my source: David Coleman, *passim* at the Olympics, whenever a millimetre was added to, or a micro-second knocked off, some existing world record). The new area in this case was blue movie-making, a positively decadent innovation in a suburban patch like Thamesford and one which got the more febrile constables pretty hot under the collar. But then the villainy has been getting too worldly for its own good in the present series: already two up-and-coming young bombers have been hoist with their own gelly and a gang of international kidnappers foiled in a shoot-out on the airport runway.

It's time *Softly Softly* simmered down and revived the small-time snatches and break-ins which were once its own ideal form of social realism. The man behind the dirty film, a fashion photographer with the bloodless lips and rimless spectacles of your true television pervert, was beaten when the law first nobbled his stars and then infiltrated the set hidden inside a horsebox. Frustratingly, we were not allowed any excerpts from the dastardly work in progress, but the alert habitué of such entertainments will have seen enough of the cast-list – blonde 11-year-old, bare-chested young man in mortar-board, and piebald stallion hired by the day from a guileless local farmer – to concoct a satisfying shooting-script of his own.

Radio

Peter Porter

An Adventure

The first thing to be said about the Third Programme is that it wouldn't stand a chance in hell of being set up today. Perhaps that is why arts reporters and cultural journalists have been writing about the Thirtieth Anniversary of its foundation as if they had been asked to reconstruct the atmosphere and surroundings of Versailles. All the old stories of its aloofness, its indifference to its audience, even the oft-told jokes have been trotted out. Everyone seems to agree that the aims of its founders, back in 1946, could hardly have been more elitist, and therefore inappropriate to 1976, if alienation of the masses had been their conscious objective. I feel it my duty to honour the Third in a different way – to explain why I think that at its best it reached the highest level of broadcasting in the world, and also why I consider its basic principles to have been democratic and not exclusive. But, warned by Stephen Hearst, Controller of Radio 3, who spoke of the past and present of the channel when launching a celebratory lunch last week, I shall try to avoid nostalgia.

Two of his observations seem absolutely correct. Firstly, that there is little point in comparing the old Third with today's Radio 3 – not just because their aims are different but because they serve utterly different worlds. In 1946, England was entering the period of Austerity (I waive the notion that we may be about to do so again); there were few rival entertainments to radio – only one television channel, pubs and cinemas. It was also a time of high idealism, with a newly elected Labour Government not afraid of the idea of culture. I do not need to underline the contrast with today. Seriousness has simply gone out of people's minds, or they want to be led to it. And the number of distractions is manifold. The Third was never an educational channel, which was one of the things I liked about it. Art, and to a lesser extent, music are acceptable to the authorities today if they

are part of some course. The Third simply put things on and if you were interested, you listened.

Mr Hearst's second point was true of the Third and still true of Radio 3: there is no attempt to get network loyalty, but only programme interest. If you like the look of a programme you have seen advertised in *Radio Times*, then you tune in. You might stay for its successor, but nothing is done, either in planning the sequence of programmes or offering special inducements, to keep you tuned to the wavelength. It is the pursuit of listening loyalty (understandable in the case of commercial radio selling advertising space) which makes for wall-paper broadcasting. She shall have music wherever she goes has become the rule. Mr Hearst's points are well made. Very few people want the old Third back. I discovered this in the days of the Third Programme Defence League and later when the CBB (Campaign for Better Broadcasting) opposed the recommendations of 'Broadcasting in the Seventies'. It was clear to me that the cause was lost. Our supporters didn't really care beyond signing letters to *The Times*. If so much of the best in broadcasting has been killed by the BBC hierarchy itself, it is just as true that the public has been lazy and indifferent.

How good then was the Third in its heyday? I didn't come to England until 1951, when some of its most heroic feats were already accomplished, but I heard hours of fine broadcasting, at intervals, in the Fifties and early Sixties. I remember the Third with gratitude for its variegated programming: almost every evening you could listen to something outside your usual range which impressed you. When I think of the Third now, I don't usually recall its famous achievements – the plays of MacNeice, Dylan Thomas and Henry Reed (except his Neapolitan and Shakespearean fantasies), or the Schoenberg and Goethe centenaries (though MacNeice's translation of *Faust*, commissioned by the Third, is an underrated achievement), or five-hour marathons, such as Ibsen's *Emperor and Galilean*, but Isaiah Berlin talking, Alan Lomax introducing American folk music, Dylan Thomas reading Roethke, Beckett's *All That Fall*, and my first introduction to Kleist and Ugo Betti. Some of this carried over to Radio 3, especially in the late Sixties, when Martin Esslin was so active presenting the new fabulists of Eastern Europe to us. Seeing Herzog's film of Casper Hauser, I was able to follow it only because I could remember Terence Tiller's brilliant radio presentation of Hauser's life. At the back of my mind, there is a fading film of images derived from my listening. This imperfect retrieval system is all I have of education, and most of it came from broadcasts on the Third Programme. To call this austere presented, unhuckstered broadcasting elitist is a brutal misuse of terminology. The sense of being excluded could only have been engendered in people's own minds.

Radio 3's celebration of the Third's anniversary has been low-key, in keeping with Stephen Hearst's dislike of looking back. Apart from Sir William Haley's reminiscences, Harman Grisewood's choice of records and a few musical offerings from the Forties and Fifties, the broadcast fare

has been much as usual. But in the run-up and in celebration week itself, one or two programmes have breathed the spirit of the Third. Rhys Aurian's play *Buffet* represented radio as the catalyst of talented writers. Mr Adrian has made his career on radio and *Buffet* was his most brilliant piece yet. The *Havergal Brian Festival* showed Radio 3 as impresario and vindicator, and an old mode, dear to the Third's heart, the imaginary conversation, was revived brilliantly by John Spurling in *Where Tigers Roam*, a conjectured encounter between William Wordsworth and Robespierre in the Champs Elysées two days before Robespierre's guillotining.

Films

John Coleman

Making Muscle

Stay Hungry Academy Three
Picnic at Hanging Rock ABCs Shaftesbury
 Avenue, Bloomsbury, Fulham Road and
 and Bayswater
The Shootist Plaza 2
The Last Woman Columbia
Goodbye, Norma Jean Casino

'Do it unsparingly,' whatever you settle on, is Uncle Albert's advice to his rich, recently orphaned nephew, Craig (Jeff Bridges), counsel clearly at the fluttering heart of Bob Rafelson's latest, in some ways most extravagant movie, *Stay Hungry*. Rafelson may be recalled as the director of *Five Easy Pieces*, in which Jack Nicholson commuted – less than easily, I thought – between a background in classical music and a foreground of oil-rigger's mud; subsequently, there was *The King of Marvin Gardens*, with Mr Nicholson this time a disc-jockey tugged by big brother from Pennsylvania to high jinks in wintry Atlantic City; and maybe one was getting the Rafelson drift better or maybe it was a better film: certainly I enjoyed myself more readily. Now, *Stay Hungry* – and anyone who thinks Robert Altman the current American master of fragmentation, weird and wonderful juxtapositions, things incredible to see, might as well leave the room. Cut down to bite-size, the 'plot' (drawn from a Charles Gaines novel by Rafelson and its author) has to do with bereft young Craig striking out from the family mansion on the Mountain – as it is known socially – on a career in every sense of his own: first, lending himself to a job with some unsavoury property men in the high-rise centre of Birmingham, Alabama; via this, finding himself involved with the freakish personnel of a gymnasium he is supposed to be buying out. The story, then, proceeds to a conventional enough denouement, thanks presumably to the underpinning of that Gaines original. Our candid (Candide?) hero, very decently played by Mr Bridges, turns up trumps, both for himself and for others.

Meanwhile, there has been a great deal else going on and it is that which is likely to reward. Down in the gymnasium there is Joe Santo, a muscleman in training under a Batman outfit for the Mr Universe title, performed with an astounding, self-absorbed gentleness by a genuine winner from Austria, Arnold Schwarzenegger. This Joe weans Craig from his crusty heritage, even donating him a girlfriend, the delightful Mary Tate (Sally Field). One scrap of erotic play on the stairs, back at the dust-sheeted mansion, is so simple and pungent it fairly takes the bad breath away from other of the week's encounters. There is a dignified black retainer (Scatman Crothers) who refuses to take such lewdness and, quitting, enshrines a whole, ghastly, ingrained code of deep Southern courtesy and crap; there is a marvellously orchestrated grand party that expands on this, ('You sure got some peaky-looking relatives,' says Mary Tate, wearing the wrong kind of dress); there is a frightening, nasty orgy at the gym, with its bewigged owner going berserk on drink, drugs and memories of past prowess. What could as justly have been the film's last sequence (before the Cinderella stuff that does end the revels) discovers a rippling horde of body-builders chasing round the streets of Birmingham: suddenly, they forget why – a defaulting prize-money holder – and strike thunderous poses for the populace. It is as unexpected and comically refreshing as anything Rafelson has yet tumbled on. Please make Academy Three bulge.

Picnic at Hanging Rock is by the Australian, Peter Weir, who made the half-way menacing *The Cars That Ate Paris*. On St Valentine's Day, 1900, a party of school-girls in Victoria set out for the al fresco event of the title. One word goes that it all, authentically, took place: another that Joan Lindsay's novel, on which *Picnic* is based, has somehow inclined people to think it did. Be that as it may, the film shows a geology-spouting teacher and three of the *jeunes filles en fleur* (and they are hugely that, rustling, whispering, poetry-reciting, with several little beauties amongst them, as well as a ravishing young French mistress) failing to return from the outing, though one is found – days later – with no apparent recall of what happened. It would be mean to say that Mr Weir leaves his audience in a similar condition, since his movie starts stunningly, handsomely, memorably: it does, however, have a disconcerting lack of stamina. Among the girls, Anne Lambert, as a lost one with premonitions, and Margaret Nelson, as she-who-gets-slapped, quite stand out, the first for her glamour, the second for a damn good bit of acting.

Don Siegel's *The Shootist* carries us a neat year on in manufactured history, to January, 1901, and Carson City, Nevada, whither wends his way Wayne, the man who beat the Big C in life but here – none too disarmingly – come to die, as J.B. Books, last of the great gunmen, of the same disease, cancer. In this Wayne/Books has Lauren Bacall as an upright Christian lodging-house ma'am, James Stewart as a squeamish local doctor, John Carradine as an old eager-beaver undertaker, among other faces of previous notoriety, to ease his

passage. 'Mister,' drawls Duke, putting a weary bullet into a would-be bandit early on, 'you better find another line of work. This one sure don't fit your pistol.' Of course, this strange affair fits Wayne's like a custom-built holster: only, it is one made out of plastic.

One thing about this job. There is always a worse movie round the corner. In this case, two. If I single out Marco Ferreri's *The Last Woman* as more stomach-turning than Larry Buchanan's *Goodbye, Norma Jean* (amen to that, on the paltry casting-couch garbage forked over therein), it is because I nearly threw up at the Ferreri – those who saw his *La Grande Bouffe* may deem the reaction appropriate – whereas the pretend-MM, after initial disgust, made for sleepiness. 'La Dernière Femme' (it was made in French, with a Franco-Italian cast) takes a prolonged stare at the wobbling buttocks, hanging belly and often auto-animated genitalia of a chap called Gerard Depardieu. He absolutely can't leave himself alone. The full frontal caper is further enlivened by the presence of a 13-month infant given the ungrateful role of his son (is there no abroad equivalent of the NSPCC?), with whom our Gerard also fiddles when his whimsy so takes him, and by a handful of women, verbally preoccupied by their Liberation but on-camera busy wandering round and over beastly Gerard. Ferreri has seen *Last Tango* and learnt nothing of importance. The sick occasion finishes on a fine, drastic bit of cutting.

Racing

Joanna Kilmartin

Prix Spree

I had an uncle who used to say 'Wallabaloo, where's the fox? What's going to win the 3.30?' to every barman or taxi-driver he encountered. It never failed: the barmen and taxi-drivers thus enigmatically addressed would always turn out to be fellow racing enthusiasts. A visit to Paris for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe was an annual ritual and my uncle found that his magic formula (*Où est le renard . . .* etc.) worked equally well across the Channel. Like other well-heeled English race-goers he wore a chalk-striped blue suit, a trilby hat constantly being raised in greeting, and an air of jauntiness despite the failure of those red-hot tips he elicited; he would tell me of pre-Arc parties at the Travellers Club in the Champs Elysées and champagne with the Anglo-Irish contingent at Fouquets. Last Sunday, in the Enceinte Privée at Longchamp, not to mention the Travellers Club and Fouquets, I saw replicas of him everywhere: the English race-goer, it seems, despite the collapse of the pound, still has his weekend spree in Paris for the Arc.

Indeed, this year, with the popular grey Bruni in with a chance, the English turned up at Longchamp in what seemed to be

thousands; struggling manfully, and womanfully, with the intricacies of the Pari Mutuel, they helped to make Bruni favourite for the Arc at 9 to 4. When the big moment came the *Daily Mirror* Punters' Club sitting in the row behind me yelled 'Come on, Lester!', a heartfelt cry that became a full-throated roar and, for a moment made sedate elegant Longchamp sound like the Kop as Piggott and the exquisite-looking Bruni cantered down to the start. Although English hopes were disappointed, there was plenty of other excitement, what with a pre-race bomb in the Jockey Club stand, a heavily disputed dead heat between two English-bred horses for the first race, poor Freddy Head falling off twice, and Piggott leading all the way in the last race.

The night before the Arc, taking advantage of the occasion, a firm of French bloodstock auctioneers (director M. Poulain or Mr 'Colt') held a sale after a large party in the Bois de Boulogne at which an English racing journalist had a minor triumph of his own. Two yearlings by Mill Reef and a fancied runner in the Arc, Lagunette, were among the select group of horses up for sale. As a dramatic and effective gimmick, films of Mill Reef's victory in the 1971 Arc and Lagunette's in this year's Prix Vermeille were shown. Peter O'Sullivan, invited to do a live commentary over the Mill Reef race, turned in a performance which had the international audience on its feet and cheering. Afterwards, the Mill Reef yearlings made 900,000 and 650,000 francs apiece. Lagunette's race had a far less inspiring commentator and, coincidentally or not, she fell 500,000 francs short of her three million franc reserve: something of an anticlimax, since it was the first time ever that a classic winner had been offered at auction in mid-career. The two auctioneers, coaxing and wheedling in French and broken English, decided that a friend's frantic wave to me across the crush constituted the winning bid for a 165,000 franc foal and only let her off after a public caution.

At a more traditional pre-Arc occasion in Paris, I watched the English gambling in the world backgammon tournament held in the Travellers Club, once an *hôtel particulier*, built in the 1860s for a famous courtesan, La Païva. On this day, once a year, women are allowed in to watch the play amid the vulgar magnificence of mahogany, gilt and marble, the champagne is free and the English, among them the world champion Philip Martin and Sir Jimmy Goldsmith are usually the favourites to win. In the bar, doping was the main topic, the current witticism being that it would be the trainer who had managed to hire the best chemist who would win the Arc.

Back with our punters' package tour on Sunday night the atmosphere on the flight home was more subdued than on the flight out. Only one man was missing: he had put every dearly bought franc, his friends related, on horse number seven, Bruni, in the Arc; or so he intended. In fact, he put it on number seven in the previous race by mistake. This unfancied horse, Kamicia, won the important Criterium des Pouliches at 34 to 1. Somewhere in Paris one British punter at least is still celebrating his £600 win on Arc day at Longchamp.

Jazz

Charles Fox

Duke's Sons

Duke Ellington: The Ellington Suites
Pablo 2335 743 £3.59

Mike Westbrook Orchestra: Love/Dream and Variations *Transatlantic TRA 323 £3.25*

Neil Ardley: Kaleidoscope of Rainbows
Gull GULP 1018 £2.99

Charles Mingus: Blues and Roots *Atlantic 50 232 £3.29*

In jazz it has invariably been the soloists who have taken the initiative, making breakthroughs, shifting boundaries, defining the music's history. Composers turn up afterwards, helping to codify and sometimes popularise, transferring to paper discoveries – half accidental, half intuitive – that were made on the bandstand. Because jazz is so entirely an art of performance their taste seems paradoxical, but what it boils down to is achieving rapport with a posse of improvisers which may explain why, although tune-writers and ordinary arrangers abound, genuine jazz composers stay thin on the ground.

Duke Ellington's shadow still stretches from the Twenties right up to the present, inspiring or intimidating several generations of would-be jazz composers, rather as Yeats overtopped younger Irish poets. Nobody demonstrated more felicitously the way in which a composer should cherish his instrumentalists, collaborating with them rather than viewing them as hired hands. But, after all, the essence of Ellington's method was scoring not just for particular instruments but for particular musicians.

The Queen's Suite underlines the point. It dates from a period when Ellington seemed to be taking life easily, waving a soloist towards the microphone rather than getting out pen and paper. Yet, apart from 'The Single Petal of a Rose', by just Duke and his bassist, all the movements were conceived orchestrally, but using timbres derived from the presence of, say, Cootie Williams's trumpet or Harry Carney brooding among the saxophones.

The suite was written immediately after a visit to Britain, where Ellington had met the monarch and drenched her in graciousness ('I toured here first in 1933, your Majesty, years before you were born'). After being recorded, in 1959, a solitary copy was pressed and air-mailed to the Palace. Not until now have the hoi polloi had a chance to sample it. The two other suites on the LP date from the early Seventies, when the band was starting to fall apart, with strangers replacing antique heroes. Yet even here the warmth comes across, the human scale asserts itself.

Not until three years after Ellington's initial trip to Britain did Mike Westbrook arrive in the world. Like most homegrown jazz apprentices he absorbed the tradition from records, eking out these studies with

occasional glimpses of a touring American group. Yet during the early years in Plymouth he was already writing with particular musicians in mind (his first Workshop band included the remarkable baritone saxophonist, John Surman). *Love/Dream and Variations* revolves around four soloists: trombonists Malcolm Griffiths and Paul Rutherford, saxophonists Dave Chambers and Mike Page.

Less complex than Westbrook's last extended work (*Citadel/Room 315*), its directness gets accentuated by the scoring, reviving the clean-cut sound of the swing bands (the trumpets even yelp, here and there, like Charlie Barnet's in 'Skyliner'). But the themes are for soloists to ride on rather than to show off the ensemble. Just like Ellington, Westbrook remains an incorrigible humanist – in a purely musical sense. He even genuflects to the Duke by using 'Creole Love Call' as an interlude.

In *Kaleidoscope of Rainbows* the soloists tend to be submerged, surfacing occasionally, sometimes to contribute a tinge, sometimes, like the trumpeter Ian Carr and the saxophonist Barbara Thompson, to occupy the foreground. Neil Ardley excels within a form which has supplanted Third Stream, that head-on collision between European forms and jazz practices. His sources are diverse: Balinese scales, rock rhythms, baroque counterpoint. Electronics turn up too, the synthesizers knitting away like Terry Riley. The scoring is dry, but there is a tight thematic unity.

Jazz composing, however, is not simply a matter of writing for big bands. Jelly Roll Morton started it all off by harnessing the New Orleans front-line, telling the trumpeter, clarinetist and trombonist exactly what he wanted them to do. And there is, as it happens, a particularly heavy-handed attempt at parodying Jelly Roll on one track of Charles Mingus's LP. It galumphs, at total odds with the musical fastidiousness of Jelly, a great upholder of Creole style and standards.

It's ironic that Mingus should be the culprit, for he is undoubtedly the most creative manipulator of a small jazz ensemble since Morton, a composer who operates from behind his string bass rather like a field commander, able to change his strategy whenever the need or the whim arises. Mingus's adulation of Ellington gets reflected in his deployment of Pepper Adams's baritone sax and the way his trombonists keep their wa-wa mutes at the ready. But the idiom is post-Parker, just as the soloists are. And 'Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting' acts as a reminder that Mingus as the first composer to create something worthwhile out of that Fifties vogue – it later congealed into 'soul music' for mixing gospel music with the blues.

Wilfrid Mellers once reckoned that, whatever his protestations, Mingus was more at home with the comic than the tragic. Perhaps it's easier to view him as less of a poet, more of a novelist – and a picaresque novelist too. His compositions heave with activity, teem with characters, skip from episode to episode. Had Smollett only been cinnamon-brown and born in Nogales, Arizona instead of in Dumbartonshire two centuries earlier, he might have come up with music like this.

Cheltenham Festival

Julian Barnes

Sparring Partners

'It's hard to believe when you're in Cheltenham', reflected Doris Lessing, 'that the human race is under terrific pressure, and very frightened, and we don't know what is going to happen.' It certainly was hard: the place is so quietly prosperous (more millionaires, it is said, live within ten miles of Stow-on-the-Wold than anywhere else in the country), and the literary festival is such an agreeably relaxed occasion, with eager, friendly audiences (none of that foot-shuffling at question time), that remarks about personal, let alone cosmic, disaster are apt to seem almost a breach of good manners. By the end of the week's festivities, however, the life of the writer and, equally, life as seen by the writer, emerged as both sombre and rather disheartening.

Philip Toynbee, for instance, looked back to the Thirties, when the ethos demanded that writers be 'drunkards, wifebeaters, nymphomaniacs, spongers and cowards' (he scored 3 out of 5), and then reviewed the 'weakness, failures and miseries' of his own life. Doris Lessing spoke of good writing coming only out of vulnerability and uncertainty, and of the sacrifices demanded of the writer. The featured rediscovery of the festival, Ivor Gurney, wrote poems of grim lucidity ('Why have You made life so intolerable?' begins his address *To God*), and spent his last 15 paranoid years in the City of London Mental Hospital. The recital of poetry written by 16 to 21-year-olds drew from the *Gloucestershire Echo* the headline 'Night of Gloom at Playhouse'. Even the amiable local poet Frank Mansell ('I'm just a wild boy down from the hills', he confided, though easily the best-dressed man of the week) seemed infected. 'It's funny', he mused, after reading three elegies in a row, 'I'm quite a cheerful fellow really; I don't know why a lot of my poems turn out sad.' It was left to Laurie Lee, literature's Arthur Negus, an embroidered rose on his sweater, to warm us up with the jolly comfort of mere heartbreak.

The high points of this year's festival were the talks given by Philip Toynbee and Doris Lessing. Mr Toynbee, rumped and monkish, displayed a lacerating honesty, mixing personal self-denigration and professional self-confidence in a manner which chilled the initial English benevolence of his audience. Most of his life, he said, he had been 'blunderingly self-occupied'; he spoke of his 'abysmal war record', of being a giant at the typewriter but a pygmy and an invalid to his wife. It was hard to tell whether the vaulting ambition ('I am to be the Goethe of my time', he read us from his journal of 1953) or the frankness of its confession embarrassed his listeners the more. They cheered up a lot, though, when he spoke of his recent spiritual development, and of the farming community he has founded; from a season in hell and an inner death,

he has come into a present belief in the God of Love which demands expression more powerfully than anything else in his life. After this, his closing claim to 'greatness' (based on the 340,000-word final version of *Pantaloön*, planned as 'the Faust, Iliad or Divine Comedy of our time') slipped down rather more easily; and at question time curatey probes predominated. Mr Toynbee, whatever the state of his soul, has lost none of his sharpness. One questioner, looking for a parallel journey from Left politics to Christianity, dropped the name of Malcolm Muggeridge. 'Every time Muggeridge opens his mouth and talks about religion', snarled Mr Toynbee conclusively, 'I feel I'm not a Christian.'

The rare public appearance of Doris Lessing was sombre and revealing in a less direct fashion. Gravely beautiful beneath her inimitable dig-for-victory hairstyle, she dismissed interest in the private life of the writer, but gave an extremely lucid account of the moods and techniques of her creative life. The enemies, not just of promise, but of sheer survival, are ubiquitous. Writing demands a thick skin, self-confidence, and a determination to ignore the demands of critics and readers: integrity is largely a matter of sheer obstinacy. The social side of literary life is always dangerous: indeed, Miss Lessing finds she has to deliberately limit a whole side of her personality for the sake of her writing. Though gregarious by nature, she lives a solitary life: going out for the evening uses up too much energy. One of the central technical questions for a writer, she thought, was what sort of energy he uses, and how, and when does he use it. Lethargy was the occupational disease of writers: could it even, she wondered, be itself a form of energy?

As for the springs of creation, all her writing came out of 'uncertainty, rawness, and crudeness'. A friend of hers, who wrote his way out of a severe depression with a successful first novel, illustrated the cruel paradox of writing: his success destroyed the emotional sources of the novel, and with them the chances of writing anything similar. She herself was a 'low-degree manic depressive', writing her way towards self-discovery: the excitement she feels on sitting down to write is at what she may find out about herself. 'What I actually think is gloomy beyond belief', she admitted. There was almost nothing cheerful in the world today (Rhodesia she compared to Dickensian England), and she feared man was evolving 'in ways which we don't understand at all'. In the circumstances, she conceded, she was rather surprised when any of her books had optimistic endings.

As if the writer's lot hadn't enough discomforts, the Festival had laid on Christopher Ricks, who reprimanded various authors for getting their facts wrong. In a

dazzling bustle of wit, the Prof put the well-polished boot into Yevtushenko (wrong about American nightingales), Nabokov (wrong about the phonetics of the name Lolita), Pushkin (wrong about military dress at balls), John Wain (wrong about the Hiroshima pilot), Coleridge, Yeats, Browning, Tennyson, Hugh Scanlon and William Golding (wrong about optics in *Lord of the Flies*: Piggy's specs were for myopia, and so couldn't have been used as burning glasses). There was, of course, a positive side to the argument – that irony and fantasy become unusable if the factual side of literature is unreliable. But one was left feeling vaguely protective towards writers, and hoping that Professor Ricks's image of William Golding living in fear of exposure in a more popular journal than *Notes and Queries* was, in its turn, less than accurate.

For all the array of potential vicissitudes the week threw up, the number of aspirants to the literary life remains bafflingly enormous. Despite an entry fee, 21,000 people went in for the Festival's poetry competition. The Director, P. J. Kavanagh, found reading the manuscripts 'an extraordinarily encouraging experience from the human point of view'. From the literary angle, it was less encouraging: 90 per cent of entrants, he said, had clearly never read a single line of contemporary poetry, and were writing in a vacuum. Moreover, it was 'heartbreaking' how many poems contained five or six really good lines, and then collapsed (Doris Lessing recorded similar findings from judging a *Reynolds News* fiction competition: numerous entries were 'nearly very good', but no one, when told to rewrite, ever did so). Unsurprisingly, then, the Cheltenham prizes went to three established professionals (George Mackay Brown, Edwin Morgan and Charles Tomlinson). The rest, it seems, must learn to rewrite if they are to progress in the writer's privileged world of depression and pain.

Weekend Competition

No 2433

Set by E. O. Parrott

Some of the most celebrated passages of verse and prose were at one point subjected to gruelling authorial revisions. Competitors are asked to produce early versions of these passages in which errors of construction, grammar, etc., render the passages liable to misunderstanding or ridicule. 12 lines or 120 words by 22 October.

Result of No 2430

Set by T. A. Dyer

The setter of this comp (who now earns a comfortable living by setting NS competitions) recently won the 'Brain of Britain' contest. He wondered if there were alternative national contests for other parts of the anatomy.

Report

by Little Keith

The Editor, in his morbid way, dreaded another influx of muck this week, but our competitors were in sprightly mood and some of them even got their kicks by deliberately subverting his expectations. The 'Ulcer of Britain', it's true, made queasy

Friday-morning reading, and there were several quite revolting entries about intestines and the like. Mostly mild enough stuff, though, in all senses; £6 apiece.

Last night the BBC took ITV by storm - Relax folks! I refer to the Belly Button Contest. This great Navel Battle was a wow, and the hitherto umble umbilicus triumphed. Each outstanding omphalos (Belly Buttons to you!) was greeted with tum-pestuous applause and the winner's tears tugged at the nation's navel-strings. A real bellyvision (Oops!) spectacular, ably compered by Mike ('Can you pick up coins with it?') Aspirin. Lovely camerawork picked out every nook, cranny, crevice and convolution of those yummy tummies. Yes, folks, belly buttons are here to stay! A European championship - Ventres sans Frontiers - is planned. MP Cyril Smith has been invited to judge.

TUM DONNELLY

QUESTION MASTER: Occupation Mr Smith?
SMITH: Secondhand pram dealer.
QM: Where do you buy your prams?
S: I steal them from outside shops.
QM: What about the babies in the prams?
S: I dump 'em. Nearest litter-bin.
QM: Any hobbies?
S: Yes. I protect seven girls; prostitutes.
QM: Protect them from what?
S: Me. If they don't pay up I bash 'em.
QM: What does your mother think?
S: She's one of the seven girls.
QM: Do you buy them clothes?
S: Only their knickers. Wear and tear is ruinous. You've gotta be fair.
QM: Where do you buy the knickers?
S: Steal 'em from clothes lines.
QM: Whose clothes lines?
S: Council estates chiefly . . . you get a better class of knicker . . .

QM: Mr Smith. I declare you The Heel of Britain!
H. GERALD

Bitter accusations that the winner of this year's 'Bonce of Britain' contest had sullied his amateur status by being french-polished by a pro specially imported from Perpignan further marred yesterday's rain-sodden prizegiving in Skegness. Earlier in the week, the Mayor had expressed fears that in their fanatic resolve to be hailed as possessor of Britain's Brightest Bald Barnet, some competitors were actually imperilling their health. However, only two cases of crania catching fire under dint of ceaseless buffing have been authenticated,

though several other entrants have retired with severe chafing. Shielding my eyes from the dazzle of his refulgent dome, I asked the winner, Syd Nutt, about the accusations of cheating. 'Well, are we in the effing EEC or aren't we, that's what I want to know?' was his rather oblique rejoinder. TERRY TOWLING



Tony Miles

Chess

No 2 London/New York Telex Match

The recent telex match between London and New York was, from an English point of view, more successful for spectators than players. The event, sponsored by Lloyd's Bank, was staged at the Bloomsbury Centre Hotel in London and the Manhattan Chess Club in New York, and resulted in a crushing victory, 8-4, for the American side.

The individual results (in board order - six 'masters', one woman and five juniors - ages in brackets - London names first): A. J. Miles $\frac{1}{2}$, L. Shamkovitch $\frac{1}{2}$; W. Hartston 0, B. Zuckerman 1; J. Mestel 0, A. Soltis 1; J. D. Nunn 1, A. Bisquiere 0; A. J. Whiteley 0, E. Mednis 1; R. Bellin 0, M. Boskovic 1; S. Caldwell 0, R. Crotto 1; D. Goodman (18) 0, M. Rohde (17) 1; J. Pigott (19) 1, E. Moskow (18) 0; J. Hodgson (13) 0, M. Wilder (14) 1; N. Short (11) 1, J. Benjamin (12) 0; N. Carr (8) $\frac{1}{2}$, A. Jovanovic (8) $\frac{1}{2}$.

There was also a 'board of honour' on which Sir Stuart Milner-Barry beat Edward Lasker, and an under-10 game where J. Howell lost to R. Le Donne. (Both sides, as the observant reader may notice, were liberally sprinkled with 'guest' players.)

The move rate for the match was 40 in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, very rapid by normal international standards, but designed to account for the long delays in sending moves. However, this is not entirely satisfactory as it is difficult to condition one's self to concentrate fully whilst awaiting the reply to one's last move. Personally, I also find it impossible to direct anything like the same amount of aggression at an opponent who is several thousand miles away and whose only discernable reaction is the occasional

rattle of a teleprinter.

The one great advantage of this kind of match is that the slowness of the proceedings allows sufficient time for leading players to give running commentaries on all games, and discuss interesting positions with the spectators. From this standpoint the match was a great success as an audience of about 150 crowded into the room where the commentaries took place. (In contrast the English team were forced to share a stuffy, medium-sized broom cupboard with a refreshment stand, but I digress . . .)

The following game received the prize as the best won by a New York player on the master boards.

White: A. J. Whiteley (London)

Black: E. Mednis (New York)

1. P-Q4, N-KB3; 2. P-QB4, PKN3; 3. N-KB3, B-N2; 4. P-KN3, O-O; 5. B-N2, P-Q3; 6. O-O, P-QB3; 7. N-B3, Q-R4.

Another interesting possibility is the provocative 7. . . . B-B4 and if 8. N-R4, B-K3; 9. P-Q5, P x P (or B-Q2); 10. P x P, B-Q2 when the white KN is misplaced and the long black diagonal further opened. Also if white tries to exploit the position of the bishop by 8. N-Q2 (or K1) black may continue with . . . P-Q4 when 9. P-K4 loses a pawn.

8. P-K4, Q-KR4; 9. P-K5, P x P; 10. N x P, Q x Q; 11. R x Q, R-Q1; 12. B-KN5, P-KR3; 13. B-K3, N-R3; 14. R-Q2, N-B2; 15. R-K1, B-K3.

White has some spatial advantage and the more aggressively placed minor pieces. He should now consolidate his position with 16. P-QN3. Instead he embarks on a dubious combination.

16. B-B4, P-KN4; 17. N x QBP7, P x B; 18. N x R, R x N; 19. B x P? Only makes matters worse. He should try 19. P-Q5 but his position remains bad. After the text the black minor pieces run riot.

19. . . . B x P; 20. R x P, N-K3; 21. B-B3, N x P; 22. K-N2, N-Q2. Threatening . . . N x B 24. K x N, N-K4 ch.

23. B-Q5, N-N3; 24. B-K4, B-K3; 25. R x RP, N-B5; 26. R-Q1, N x P; 27. R-QN1, P-B6 ch; 28. K-R1. Or 28. B x P, N x B; 29. R x N, B x N; 30. R-B2, N-K8 ch.

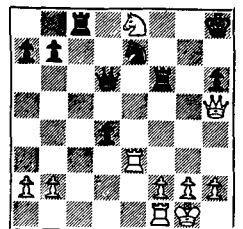
28. . . . B-R6! 29. R-R8. 29. R x N, B-N7 ch; 30. K-N1, N-K7 ch; 31. R x N, B x N was another way to go. 29. . . . R x R; 30. B x R, N-Q6. Threatening . . . N-K7. 31. R-N8 ch, B-KB1; 32. R-K6, N x P ch; 33. K-N1, N-N5; 34. K-R1, P-B7; 35. B-N2, P-B8 = Q ch; 36. B x Q, B x B; 37. P-QR4, K-N2; 38. R-K1, B-R6; Resigns.

Problem 2

Solution in two weeks

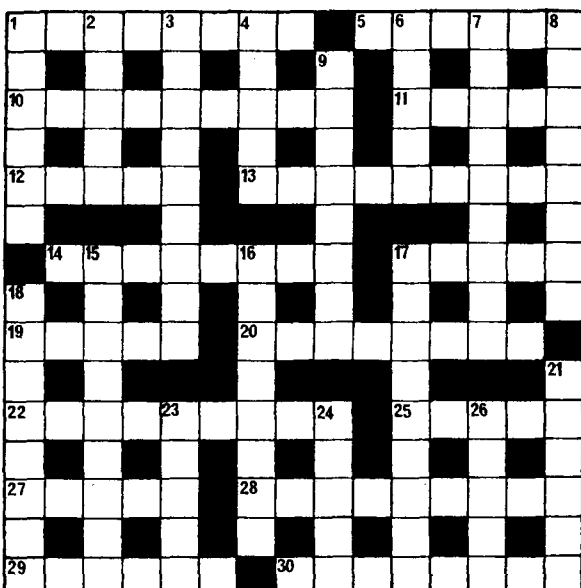
Black to play - how should the game go?

Solutions to me at the NEW STATESMAN as usual



Weekend Crossword 1185

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1185, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7JH, by first post 19 October.



ACROSS

- The river has to turn and hurry (8).
- If you start bragging before a mountain, you'll have a ludicrous descent (6).
- Town for a female worker (9).
- Authentic works but apart from the first letter their authorship is unknown (5).
- Fear with loss of head is a mistake (5).
- It is delicious to give a friend a place to eat (9).
- Empty words in rhyme (8).
- Favour one who does art in an examination (5).
- Precious things make an appeal to friends (5).
- Surprised the beginning came first! (8).
- Idlers make up songs about a fight (9).
- Man who has a limb in back to front (5).
- Exhausts although there is point in fighting (5).
- One in ten possibly in the wrong train are travelling (9).

- Rebellion is wrong in naval outfit (6).
- Bandits form groups if they lose their gear (8).

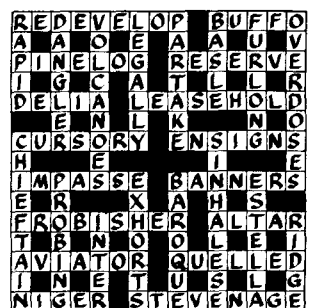
DOWN

- Better, Sam? (6).
- Drain is put into lowest place (5).
- The rest possibly carry a satchel for imperial responses (9).
- Miss out about a thousand to be economical (5).
- Race meeting where lucky thing loses a thousand (5).
- A banker had exchange control (9).
- Odd rude ends cut off (8).
- Queen makes Duke father (8).
- When early peas are sown? (4, 5).
- Monk who converts puritans (8).
- He's a strange egg, Bunter, but the magazines couldn't have existed without him (9).
- Disciple who may make one well for nothing (8).

- Groovy instruments? (6).
- No kinsman is got up as an animal (5).
- A big hit for a winter sportsman (5).
- Crop needs moisture after it starts growing (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1183



Prizewinners to No 1183

J. Wallwork (Blackburn)
Carolyn Paton (London EC1)
John Gibson (Pewsey)

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The Director,
Merseyside Arts Association (NS),
6 Bluecoat Chambers,
LIVERPOOL L1 3BX;
or phone 051-709 0671.
The closing date for applications
will be 29 October.

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Hull College of Higher Education

Cottingham Road Hull HU6 7RT
Telephone (0482) 41451



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Southern Arts

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Further details and application forms (please quote ref F/ST) from: John Greig (Ext 3) or Mary Nee (Ext 9), SSRC, 1 Temple Avenue, London EC4Y 0BD
Tel: 01-353 5252

CLOSING DATE FOR
APPLICATIONS: 1 FEBRUARY
1977.

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Please quote reference 818.

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If you feel you might be able to offer a home for approximately 18 months, or would like to discuss matters in greater detail, please contact Mrs. G. BATLEY, SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, BLEAK HOUSE, CATHERINE STREET, ST. ALBANS.

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MALE, 58, slim, tall, loves simple life, nature, music with sympathetic f. Box 5428.

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VANBRUGH THEATRE CLUB. 13-16 Oct. Jean Genet's 'The Balcony'. Details: RADA, 62 Gower St, WC1. 01-637 7076.

Entertainments

FRANCES & MICHAEL HOROVITZ read their poetry Wed. 13 Oct. 6.30 at the National Book League, 7 Albemarle St, W1 (nearest tubes Green Park, Piccadilly Circus). 01-493 9001. Adm. free.

Meetings

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON. Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2.12 Oct. 'What is a Picture?' by Professor Richard Wollheim. 14 Oct. 'University College London' - a film of life and work in a large London college. Admission free. Details of Public Lectures from Publications Office (send stamped envelope).

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BRITAIN TODAY AND TOMORROW. Public meeting organised by Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) in Basildon, Essex. Friday 15 October. 7.30 p.m. at 'Bull's Eye' public house, Town Centre, Basildon. Main speaker: Reg Birch, Chairman, CPBML.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Frances Cairncross, of the Guardian, on 'The Rise of the Service Economy'. 8 p.m. 13 Oct. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. Collection: all welcome.

SOCIALISM IN CHINA Surges Forward. Public meeting organised by Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) to remember Chairman Mao's living testament to world revolution. Report by recent Party delegation to China. Friday, 8 Oct. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, Holborn WC1. 7.30 p.m.

MAXISM & CULTURE, THE POLITICS of Form. Series of Weekly Seminars. Thursdays at 7 p.m. 14 Oct. Film: Peter Wollen; 21 Oct. Mass Media: Stuart Hood; 28 Oct. Theatre: Albert Hunt; 4 Nov. Literature: Terry Eagleton; 11 Nov. Science: Robert Young; 18 Nov. Visual Arts: Toni del Renzio; 25 Nov. Music: Cornelius Cardew; 2 Dec. Technology: David Dixon. Adm. 70p. Studs & ICA mems. 50p. Season tickets £4.50 & £3.20. ICA, The Mall, SW1. Box office 930 6393.

SHAW SOCIETY. Extraordinary General Meeting. Sunday 17 October. 2.45 p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1.

YOUNG MAPAM invites you to a talk by Yisrael Elman on the subject 'Social and Political Trends in American Jewry'. Sun. 10 Oct. 8 p.m. at 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY. 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Tues. 12 Oct. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 13 Oct. 6.30 p.m. Public Lecture 'Is Your Guru really necessary?' - Muriel Clark. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 10 Oct. 8 p.m. S.a.e. for free pamphlet, book list, programme of talks. ULT. 62 Queen's W2 3AL.

Conferences

RESPONSIBLE MAN'S WORLD. A Christian Look at Conservation and the Environment. William Temple Association National Conference. Damascus House, M. Hill, London NW7. 5-7 November 1976. Speakers: Rev. Paul Ballard, Lord Sandford and others. Single rooms. £12.00. Applications to Janet Hiscok, 29, Curlew Rd., Mudeford, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 4DA.

'CULTURE & COMMITMENT IN BRITAIN in the 30s: Communist Party Literature Group Conference: 10 Oct-17 October at the Institute of Education Union Society, Bedford Way, London, WC1, includes plenaries and seminars on Poetry and Spain, Marxist literary criticism, Orwell, Political Theatre. Tickets (£2) from: CP Literature Group, 16 King Street, London WC2.

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